MAXIMUM ROCK N ROLL

OCTOBER 2003 NUMBER 245 $4

LA FRACTION

PLUS:
ARTIMUS PYLE
NO TIME LEFT THE GIMMIES
INTENSE YOUTH! RIISTETYT

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-154, 156 pt. 1, 156 pt. 2, 158, 160-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-211, 213-244 are as stated above in subscription info.
See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

Ad Copy In (with payment):
by 15th of previous month.
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

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1/6 page: (2 3/8" x 5") $30
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COVER: Mike Thorn

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TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- VIRUS-Benefit of War-EP
- NO TIME LEFT-Indentured Servant-10"
- V/A-Oh No! It's More From the Raw-LP
- MDC-both EPs
- NAILBITER-Abused-LP
- ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT-both EPs
- VIOLENT MINDS-Know it All-EP
- ATOMSMASHERS-Drop the Bomb-LP
- ANTEENAGERS M.C. AND FRIENDS-LP
- CUT THE SHIT-LP & live

ROB COONS

- CUT THE SHIT-LP & live
- RUNNAMUCKS-Of a Different Breed-LP
- TRAGEDY / TOTALITÄR-split EP
- SKITKIDS-Skitfucked by the State-12"
- DROPDEAD / UNHOLY GRAVE-split EP
- SHOT CYRUS-Tyranus-LP
- MDC-both EPs / CRUCIAL UNIT-LP
- WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?-Euro Tour EP & live
- UBR-Organiziran Kaos-LP
- CHAINSAW/CONGA FURY/SWEET JAP-live

ARWEN CURRY

- Best MRR Guests Ever: Sara, Tristan, & Paco!
- DISCARGA-10" / MAJORITY RULE-LP
- TISCHLEREI LISCHITZKI-LP / PUT-ONS-45
- ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT-both EPs & live
- SKITKIDS-12" / FIFTH HOUR HERO-LP
- THE FONDAS-Coming Now!-LP / FIYA-EP
- J CHURCH / STORM THE TOWER-LP & live
- ENDROPHOBIA-EP / CUT THE SHIT-LP
- V/A-Root Damage-LP / CLOROX GIRLS-EP
- WILD HAIRS/FLESHIES/LOST SOUNDS-live

PAUL CURRAN

- ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT-both EPs & live
- DISKORDS / LOW ROLLERS-split EP/
- DISKORDS-live / ENDROPHOBIA-EP
- J CHURCH / STORM THE TOWER-LP & live
- KÄRNVAPEN ATTACK-Postnuclear-EP
- CLOROX GIRLS-Baby-EP / THE PUT-ONS-45
- PACK-Abyss of Desperation-EP
- SOMMERSET-More Songs-CD
- FIFTH HOUR HERO-Scattered Sentences-LP
- DYKE HARD / LOCAL OAFS-split EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- FIFTH HOUR HERO-Scattered Sentences-LP
- CLOROX GIRLS-EP / HOSPITALS-CD
- DISKORDS-live
- FIYA-Among Others-EP
- CUT THE SHIT-Harmed and Dangerous-LP
- THE SHEMPS / TO HELL AND BACK-split EP
- VIRUS-Benefits of War-EP
- FROM ASHES RISE-live
- STRIKE ANYWHERE-live
- The Kids, Punks, Scene, etc.-live

JEFF HEERMANN

- EMERGENCY / NUMBERS-split 12"
- NEINS-CD
- RUNNAMUCKS-Of a Different Breed-LP
- THE DANGER-Confession Sessions-CD
- PREACHER'S KIDS-Wild Emotions-CD
- HUSBANDS-Introducing the Sounds-LP
- LOST SOUNDS / VANISHING-split EP
- OBLIVIANS-Live Atlanta 8.1994-LP
- MR. CALIFORNIA / INVERTED-split EP
- HOSPITALS-CD

KENNY KAOS

- KAVOLCHY-One in Five-EP/ CARBONAS-EP
- RUBBER CITY REBELS-Pierce My Brain-LP
- PUT-ONS-Jack Kevorkian Gift Certificate-45
- AGITATORS / HEARTACHES-split EP
- THE ATOMSMASHERS-Drop the Bomb-LP
- KEVIN K & THE REAL KOOL KATS /
- NEUROTIC SWINGERS-split 45
- V/A-Wild Sounds from Frenchy Radio-EP
- THE FONDAS-LP
- INTERNATIONAL ROBOT-Front Door-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- HUSBANDS-LP / OBLIVIANS-LP
- FUSE!-Breaker! Breaker!-45 / CARBONAS-EP
- ANTEENAGERS M.C. AND FRIENDS-LP
- FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS-EP / SOLGER-CD
- MYSTERY GIRLS-45 / JERRY J. NIXON-CD
- MR.CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE-EP
- ATOMSMASHERS-LP / TAXI-live
- V/A-Oh No! It's More From the Raw-LP
- Ramones: End of the Century-video
- Weather Underground-film

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible—one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

FIFTH HOUR HERO-Scattered Sentences-LP	DELMONAS-Uncle Willy-CD
LOST SOUNDS / THE VANISHING-split EP	J CHURCH / STORM THE TOWER-split LP
PUT-ONS-Kevorkian-45 / TURTLEHEAD-CD	BOMBS OVER PROVIDENCE-Liberty's-CD
TEEN IDOLS-CD / EL CENTRO-Prohibido-CD	ONE CAR PILE UP-Worst Episode-CD
SOMMERSET-More Songs-CD	STRIKE ANYWHERE-live

BOBBY MANIC — WILL RISK

EXPLODING HEARTS-live	ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT-both EPs
Topless pinball at my new apartment	WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?-EP
KEVIN K / NEUROTIC SWINGERS-split 45	FIYA-EP / CUT THE SHIT-LP
GROOVIE GHOULIES / SMUGGLERS /	TRAGEDY / TOTALITÄR-split EP
MALLRATS-live / FONDAS-LP	ABI YO YOS-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

OFF ON HOLIDAY, MATE

DONNA POOLE

ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT-Train Ride-EP	CLOROX GIRLS-Baby-EP
INTERNATIONAL ROBOT-Front Door-EP	TORCHA SHED-Torture-EP
FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS-Razor Blade-EP	CARBONAS-I'm Astray-EP
SLOGGY-Jalopy Music-EP	MR.CALIFORNIA / INVERTED-split EP
TRAGEDY / TOTALITÄR-split EP	ROCK THE LIGHT-CD

BRUCE ROEHRS

GG ALLIN & ANTISEEN-Murder Junkies-LP	THRETNING VERSE-Time for War-EP
RINGWORM / TERROR-split EP	VIOLENT MINDS-Know it All-EP
TRAGEDY / TOTALITÄR-split EP	DRUGSTOP-EP / ASSERT-EP/ VIRUS-EP
V/A-More World, Less Bank-EP	RUNNAMUCKS-Of a Different Breed-EP
TORCHA SHED-EP / DEAD HEROES-EP	DROPDEAD / UNHOLY GRAVE-split EP

MIKE THORN

TOTALITÄR / WORLD BURNS TO DEATH /	SPROUTS-EP / TURCHA SHED-EP / VIOLENT
CAUSTIC CHRIST / BORN DEAD ICONS-live	MINDS-EP / VIRUS-EP / ENDROPHOBIA-EP
SKITKIDS-LP / KÄRNVAPEN ATTACK-EP	DYKE HARD / LOCAL OAFS-split EP
TRAGEDY / TOTALITÄR-split EP / ALLERGIC	DISCARGA 10" / TISCHLEREI LISCHITZKI-LP
TO BULLSHIT-both EPs / CLOROX GIRLS-EP	I SHOT CYRUS-LP/ DISKORDS-live

RYAN WELLS

V/A-Oh No! It's More From the Raw-LP	FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS-Razor Blade-EP
TROUPE DICOUPE–So Young-CD	MYSTERY GIRLS-Circles in Sand-EP
CLOROX GIRLS-Baby-EP	CARBONAS-I'm Astray-EP
HOSPITALS-CD	ANTEENAGERS M.C. AND FRIENDS-LP
SLOGGY-Jalopy Music-EP	EMERGENCY / NUMBERS-split 12"

ZINE TOP TEN

AVOW #15	RAD PARTY #32
BROKEN PENCIL #22	SLAVE #8
FOUND A JOB #2	SLOW LEAK #1
NERVE #2	SNAKE PIT #3
PERSONAL LIBERATION FRONT #4	SUBURBAN VOICE #44

ZINE SHITWORKERS

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Travis Fristoe	Gardner Fusuhara
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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent, "Roots of Punk: the Buzzcocks."

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#168/May '97. Cretin 66, Fishsticks, Distemper, Enewetak, UK Subs, Luxo Champ, Jake Sayless, "Pioneers of Punk."

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, ~Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore Fanzine, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. BACK IN STOCK! I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports,John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Huymanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

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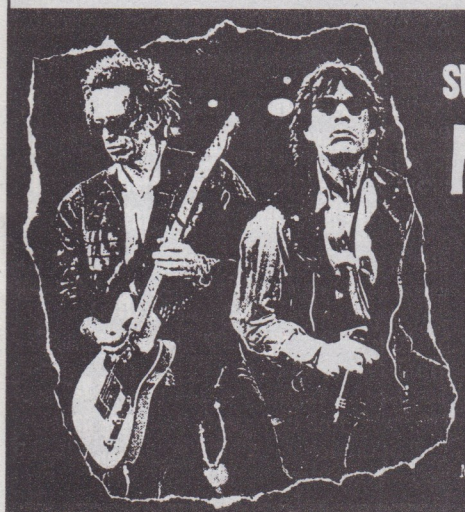

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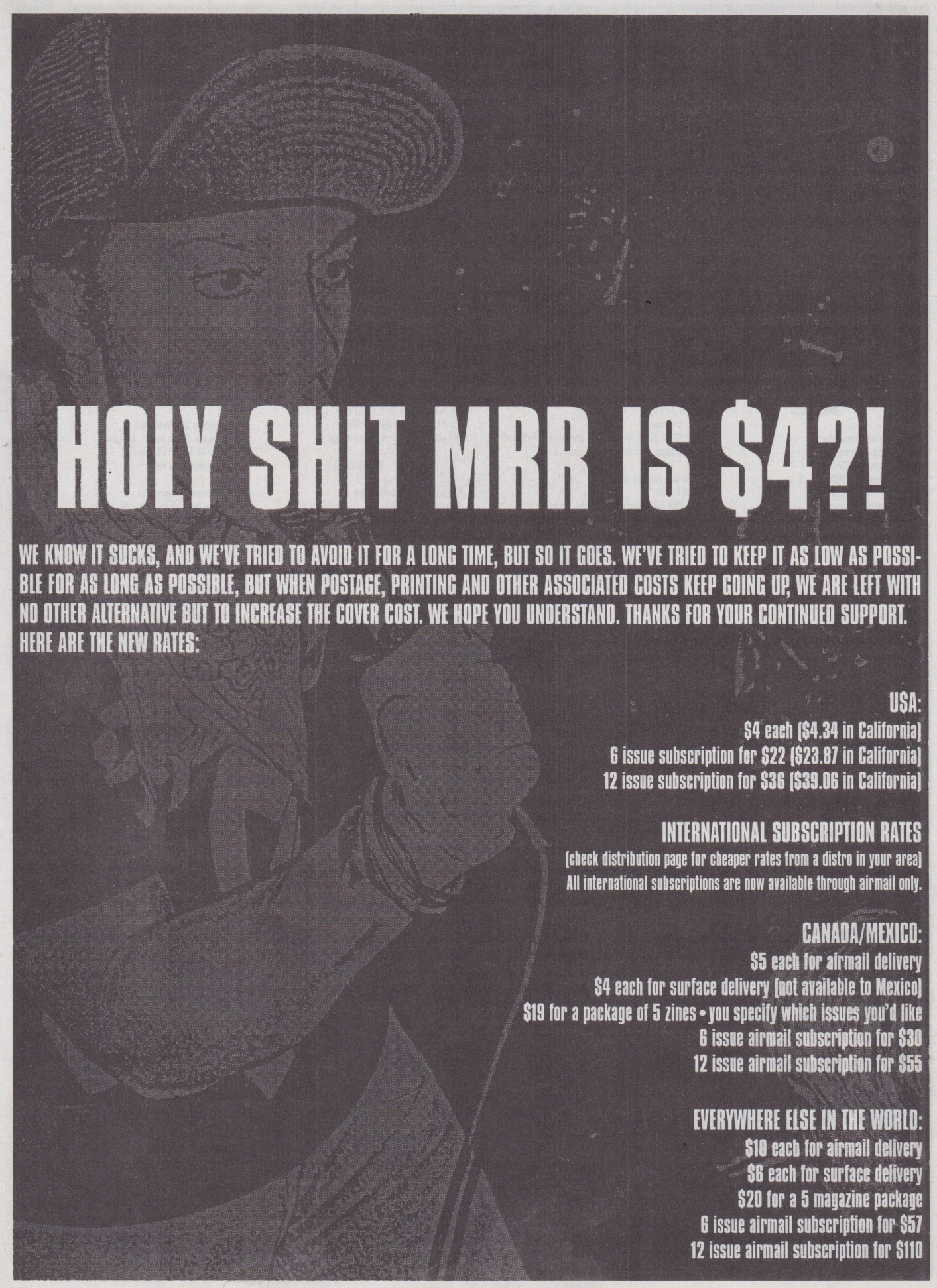

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FRIDAY, OCT. 10: THE DWARVES, the Frisk (record release), This is My Fist, Scattered Fall.
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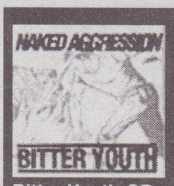

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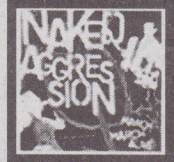

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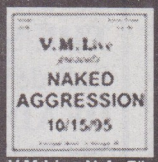

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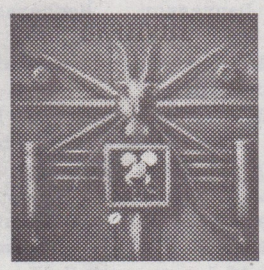

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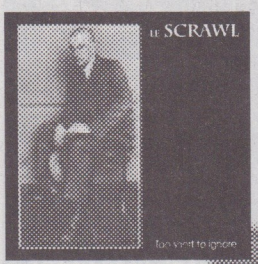

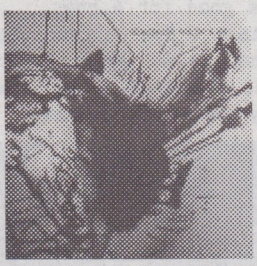

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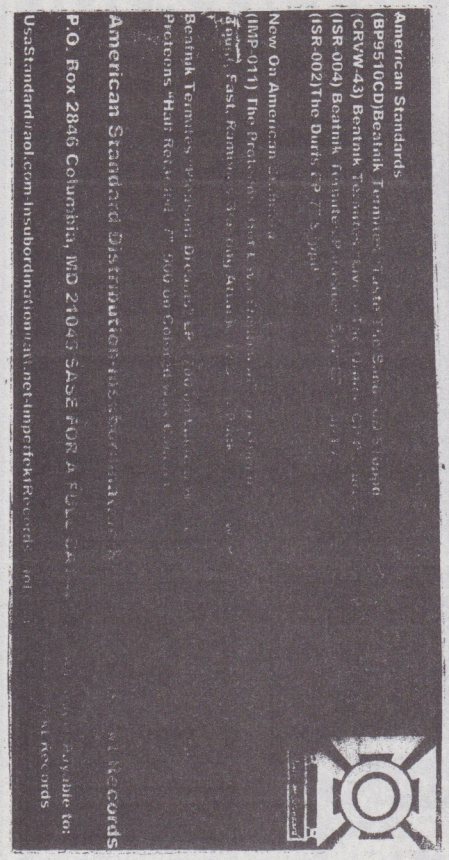

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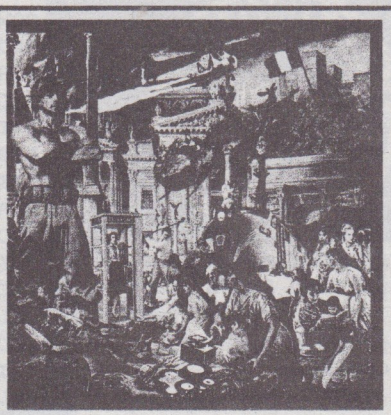

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LETTERS

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MRR—
I hate to be the bearer of bad news, folks. But here it is. My name's Joey "Joe Mutant" Siedel; I played bass in the Task Force back in the late 80s and early 90s.

Two members of the seminal Tucson Arizona punk band, Zero Tolerance Task Force, were killed Sunday morning in a single vehicle rollover about fifty miles north of Santa Fe, New Mexico. Vocalist and guitarist Fred Janis, AKA Freddie Doobers/Reverend Nero Oralson, and drummer Derrick "D-Rock" Le Veque died at the scene of the crash. Bassist JJ Styles is recovering from injuries suffered during the accident. Zero Tolerance Task Force was a fixture in the Tucson punk scene since the early 1980s, sometimes on the periphery, but always present. Their classic hardcore sound and politically challenging lyrics were often compared to The Crucifucks and Dead Kennedys. Principal songwriter Janis often took great pleasure in challenging religion, racism, and authority with such tracks as "Jesus Was A Sand Nigger," and "Dead Cops."

In a constant state of membership flux (these guys had more drummers pass through their ranks than Spinal Tap!) ZTTF had solidified its roster in the mid-1990s, with Styles adding his own songs and vocals to the mix. Even with constant upheaval in their ranks, Zero Tolerance Task Force managed to be one of the most prolific punk projects in the Southwest, releasing over half a dozen full-length albums in addition to several 7" EPs and singles. Their latest effort, the 28-track magnum opus "Punk Rockery," was released this summer. Fred Janis also dabbled as a producer, assembling the punk Monty Python tribute album, "The Brighter Side of Death."

Throughout their troubled tenure, Zero Tolerance Task Force encountered resistance when gigging out. In the late 80s Fred booked a ZTTF gig at a biker bar just outside his neighborhood. The manager, whose wife booked the show just to irritate him, was not amused. After the band backed up comic singer Fish Karma, the ire of the regulars and manager, all members of a nearby motorcycle club, grew to dangerous levels. The show climaxed in a near-riot when the bikers began raining tomatoes, bottles, and other debris on the second band in the line-up. Just before furniture began to fly, more than a dozen units from the Pima County Sheriffs surrounded the bar and the place was suddenly flooded with deputies, one for every biker in the joint. Although Zero Tolerance Task Force never got to play that night, looking over at Fred one could see his eyes beaming with glee at the chaos.
Joey Siedel
encomhq@yahoo.com

Dear *MRR*—
Long-time reader, first-time writer. Love your work. I have always seen your magazine as a progressive, liberal publication, and was therefore a little surprised to see the review for the WHN? *No Cash...No Thrash* record. In it, Janelle Blarg refers to part of the record as "...sincerely gay..." Besides when written by Rev Norb, I haven't ever seen the word "gay" thrown around in your zine in any derogatory fashion, which leads me to think Tales of Janelle either felt a particular riff was happy—like in a Flintstones "gay-old-time'" way—or queer—like in a Jeff Stryker thunder-dong sort of way. And there lies my question—was the breakdown happy or homo? Because if it's the latter and I somehow wrote a totally homosexual riff, then that would be totally hot. Hmmm, or I suppose Janelle was employing a little word play: If gay = flaming and said guitar part = gay, then one could presume said guitar part was flaming. That's pretty sweet too. (The funny thing is that I wrote that riff when I was learning to play guitar to Y & T records about fifteen years ago, so in mid-80s hessian terminology, I suppose it would have actually been considered quite "gay.") Either way,, I was just curious.
Perplexed in Pleasanton,
Craigums

MRR—
This is a letter to all the true punks in Canada to boycott this label [Epitaph] and merchandise from its bands until they stop being the McDonaldz of punk. They have now signed away whatever bit of credibility they had left and given one distributor an exclusive form *all* of Canada. Certainly this will ensure the product is available in chain outlets here in the malls, but of course you'll pay more for this privilege, and vinyl will become virtually impossible to find. People who shop in my store (The Jungle) already complain about how much more expensive it is to buy the same albums at these corporate chain stores, and now Epitaph has seen to it that this is the way of the future. For my part, I will no longer carry the label until they see the error they have made, and also will no longer carry their bands' other merchandise (T-shirts, buttons, patches...) and I urge all punks to let the bands you like know that Epitaph cares nothing for the true spirit of punk
Bill — jungle@kingston.net

Dear *MRR*—
I'm writing to say thanks for keeping the underground alive. Plus, I'm able to hear about new bands from you. I'm a skin from Michigan in prison. I get out in four months. But I wanted to say I came across a tape with S.O.A., Henry Garfield, or Rollins before Flag and Teen Idles fan before M-Threat. There's another band on the tape. Heard it but can't place it. One of the choruses goes "Sick of things the way they are. It's about time we had a change." Can anyone help me with this band? Also, I'm trying to get ahold of my friend Greg Hanna, who plays bass for the band Peligro who is DH from the DKs' band. I wanted to tell him—hopefully he'll see this in an issue. I've been playing drums for the last two years and I've gotten good playing old punk & hardcore. I'm a frontman but I wanna jam bad. I get out Dec. 23, 2003. Anyone wants a pen pal, feel free to write. As soon as I get more money I'm getting another zine. I love your mag and the cause to all the punks, skins, and hardcore lovers. Keep holding it down. Me, I represent hardcore underground everyday in here with my bro's.
Jason Booth #259083 HTF
4533 W Industrial Park Dr.
Kincheloe, MI 49786-0001

To the editor & Lien Gray:
Re: review of Disclose *Neverending War* 7" in *MRR* #243, please note that "lo-fi" is not an applicable description for this record. While the review is accurate in stating that the sound quality on this record is quite intentional, it is inaccurate to call it shitty. The 24-track digital job is actually one of the most powerful—yet raw—recordings ever made. It recalls the most furious raw punk recording ever: Anti-Cimex *Raped Ass.* While "No More Pain" has a screechy quality to it (more the fault of mastering than of recording per se), it, too, has its charms. Nevertheless, this new EP sounds nothing like that LP. The EP's recording is full and blown-out, with more top, middle, and bottom than any Disclose record yet. Perhaps one who isn't a fan of this sort of true punk would tire after ten minutes of it, but the EP lasts barely four. As the D-beat master himself asked me of this review: she "couldn't understand *raw*?" The punk scene of today will be greatly served when it learns to differentiate between 24-track digital recordings that sound like garbage because they're not punk and those that sound like garbage exactly because they are punk.

Thanks, and I hope you can re-listen to this record and appreciate its furious greatness.
Stuart Schrader, NJ
gameofthearseholes@hotmail.com

Dear *MaximumRock'n'Roll*—
Dave from *Fracture* fanzine in the UK here. I don't know if you're aware of a band from the UK called Unit, but we recently had the displeasure of receiving their latest CD in the mail. The first track on this album is called "Good Morning / Fractured" and is an attack on all the people who gave them bad reviews in the past or do not write to them anymore because they found out that singer Andy Martin is homosexual, and that three other members of the band are Chinese—I would just like to let it be known that I am deeply fucking offended by the fact that they have specifically targeted *Fracture* in this song. I reviewed their last album, and it was indeed a *terrible* review of a *terrible* record, but the fact that they feature gay and Chinese members did not come into it at all—the basic truth is, I thought their music was/is diabolical shit, and indeed the new album has just proved this point. What I am getting at is, as we are included in the write-up about this track in the booklet (and indeed the title), the song "suggests" that *Fracture* is racist and homophobic, which is just complete and utter bullshit. Quite simply put, Andy Martin is a disgusting and bitter old man who cannot accept the fact that people do not like his musical output. There is no hidden racist conspiracy within our pages; we just don't beat around the fucking bush when it comes to shit music, if you get my drift.

Anyway, now I have got that out of the way, I also just wanted to let people know that Unit is also a Rock Against Commmunism band that has a song about the evils of race mixing on this new CD. The lyrics for this song include, "keep your culture clean, keep your people pure, your identity it cannot be denied... Keep your culture clean, keep your people pure, preserve national identity by law. Culture of decadence? You decide—race mixing is national suicide." I would just like to say, *fuck this band* and their fucked up perception of mixed-race relationships—this band has no place in the punk scene. They are a venomous and bitter group of people with bizarre, almost fascistic views on life—so if you are a fanzine that has received a copy of this CD for review, please do yourself and everyone else a favor and smash it up with a hammer. If you see it in a shop, just walk on by and do something more productive with your time instead (or steal it, then smash it up with a hammer). Let's try and keep bands like these fucking hate driven bastards out of our scene, okay?
Thanks for your time.
Dave.
dave@assemblylinemusic.com

Hey—
I've been a reader of *MRR* probably since 1983 or so. *MRR* was my savior, and turned me on to more great music than any other rag I ever picked up. My mom always said I was headed nowhere listenin' to that noise and readin' that trash, and look at me now (well, you can't, I guess 'cause this is email and I ain't got a photo!)—thirty-five, with a nine-year-old kid (who worships The Ramones and his skateboard) and a wife (who's a freakin' doctor!) and a house and a great job, and I still read *MRR* and listen to all the same sounds I always did! Why am I tellin' you this? I don't really know. I guess it just makes me happy that you're still around and that I still own every issue I ever bought and I owe you guys a huge debt of gratitude that I could never ever repay. So thanks a heap...

I've been wondering something for years...How does one go about writing reviews, etc. for the mag? I've been writing reviews since 1984, wrote several columns for several mags and papers, interviewed countless bands, but never ever submitted anything to *MRR* (I still to this day have no idea why). Do you have room for any more writers/reviewers? I love the music, have years of experience, and love to write. Let me know. I can sling some mean ink!
David Brock

Well shucks, David, thanks. Let's hear it for sticking around! I thought I'd take your letter as an opportunity to address all those folks who contact us about writing reviews and things for MRR. *For various logistical reasons, all of our record and zine reviewers live in the immediate SF Bay Area. If you do, give us a call. Otherwise, we try to encourage aspiring contributors like you to submit good band interviews instead—we always need those. When wracking your brain about who to interview, don't forget about zine editors, distro dorks, and various other behind-the-scenes proles! Or if you prefer to pontificate, you can always send in a guest column. Check out this issue's guest columns for expositions by punks as venerable as yourself. Hm...on second thought, maybe it's best to stick with the band interviews?*
—Arwen

MRR—
I had just finished playing a set of my songs unplugged at the Border's Books in Oak Park and I was walking past the magazine section when I saw a copy of *MRR*. I think I had last read an *MRR* in 1994, but before then I read it on a semi-regular basis. I always enjoyed the columns by Ben Weasel and George Tabb and was always confused as to how MRR would obtain detailed punk scene reports from places such as Laos and Nigeria. But, I never once read a copy of *MRR* that was *filled* from cover to cover with pro-terrorism, pro-murder, anti-Israeli rhetoric until that recent day at Borders. I've been corresponding with some *MRR* people, trying to explain and inform them about the reality of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, but I found them automatically rejecting whatever I would say, not addressing the points I would prove, and recycling the same baseless slogans which depressed me the first time I read the recent *MRR*. Luckily, thanks to Mykel Board, he convinced the people at *MRR* to grudgingly print this letter as a means of showing a different perspective on the conflict, or as any rational, non-bias person would have it, the only constructive, *true* perspective on the subject. However, I'm afraid that *MRR*'s response to this will be just more of the same anti-Israeli, pro-terrorism rhetoric, which motivates people to murder my family living in Israel.

Plastered all over the pages of *MRR* I see the slogan "Free Palestine" and articles about the evils of Israel. In

reality, nothing has changed in the way Israel operates in 10 years, yet 10 years ago when I last read *MRR*, there was not a single comment spewing this rhetoric. Why now? Because, recently the support for terrorism against Israel has become extremely trendy. I thought *MRR* was supposed to support the opposition of conformity and the expression of open-minded, non-biased thought. So, it's pathetic that *MRR* has completely abandoned one of the reasons it started and has become nothing more than KKK or Hamas propaganda, jumping on the band wagon that is so fashionable for "liberals," who are really just trying to fill their lives with anything controversial in order to cover up their own personal problems, to spew. If one was to assess the situation in Israel and the Palestinian areas objectively, one would see that there can be no peace unless the Arabs accept Israel's right to exist and stop inciting acts of terror and murder against Israel's citizens. And always remember one thing, not one bullet has been fired by Israel that wasn't in direct retaliation against terrorism incited against them. The bottom line is that if Israel laid down their arms as you call for, they would be overrun and destroyed in an instant, but if Palestinians laid down their arms, they would be given peace and land.

Maybe you're not aware of this, but Israel is a tiny country, smaller than the state of Connecticut and with an even smaller population. Israel composes less than half of 1% of the land in the Middle East, yet this is not enough land for the Arab governments to allow another type of people to have. It is common practice by the supporters of terrorism, such as *MRR*, to paint the Palestinians as these poor, oppressed people who fight Israel with stones, while Israel fights with tanks. What you fail to acknowledge is that the Palestinian terrorists are funded, trained, and supported by virtually every Muslim country in the world, and incite terror, not daily, but *hourly* on Israeli citizens *targetting* busloads of children on their way to school. People tend to think that Israel is not the underdog since they are given large sums of money by the USA. But they also don't mention that the Palestinian Authority, headed by Yasser Arafat, is given millions and millions of dollars a year from all Arab countries, Europe, and the USA. Europe doesn't even acknowledge Hamas as a terrorist group. Hamas has said that their reason for existence is to "fight to the last drop of blood until all the Jews are pushed into the sea." The EU officially regards Hamas as a political group and funds them generously. Rather than using this money to build factories, legitimate businesses, and a general industry, which would create jobs, and get their minds off of the murder they dwell on, Palestinians use this money to buy guns, bombs, and propaganda to incite terrorism against Israel. And, Arafat manages to pocket healthy sums of these donations as well (the man is sitting on a gold mine). But who gets the blame for the Palestinians poverty? Of course, Israel. Yasser Arafat is the head of the Fatah Movement, a terrorist group that acts as the head of all the combined Palestinian terrorist groups. When Arafat speaks on TV in English, he condemns terrorist acts and speaks of peace, but when he speaks in Arabic, he praises the "martyrs" for killing Israeli's and encourages the Palestinians to continue the fight. Arafat is truly a snake in the grass, and if you want peace for Palestinians and Israel, you must support Arafat's departure.

Another thing I read about is Israel's "human rights abuses," yet I don't read a single word about the human rights abuses from Israel's neighbors that are about a billion times worse. In Egypt, it is a national policy to execute homosexuals. In Saudi Arabia, women are publicly stoned to death if they are *accused* of committing adultery. Also in Saudi Arabia, it is a national policy to execute those found in possession of hashish. In the Palestinian areas, it is common practice to execute suspected "collaborators" without any type of trial or hearing. In fact, in that entire region, Israel is the *only* country that an Arab can be accused of a crime, be put to a fair trial, be judged innocent, and be let free without a scratch on his back, and this does often happen. If *MRR* were not biased, naturally it would prioritize writing about these much worse human rights abuses rather than criticizing Israel's necessity to defend them. So what makes *MRR* and people like you so critical of Israel while completely ignoring other much worse atrocities? What has made it so trendy to target Israel for such baseless hate from you, and virtually every country in the world? One reason, it's the only Jewish country in the world, and anti-Semitism sells.

You may argue "but Israel is occupying Palestine." Well, I won't go into detail about the history of Israel. But if anything, Palestinians and western portions of Jordan are the ones occupying the Jews' land. The kingdom of ancient Israel was composed of all the West Bank, Gaza, and parts of what is now Jordan. Any time there is an archaeological dig, they find 2000 year old artifacts with Hebrew script and nothing with Arabic. In the past 3000 years, Israel was invaded and occupied by many different conquerors; Philistines, Romans, Greeks, Byzantines, etc. When the Greeks occupied Israel, they renamed it "Palestine" after the Philistines, who invaded Israel and destroyed the first ancient temple, as a means of pissing off the Jewish resistance. In Arabic, there is no name that doesn't derive from the ancient Koran, yet in the Koran the word "Palestine" or "Palestinians" isn't mentioned once. It's not even an Arabic word. The vast majority of Palestinians are Arabs that migrated into that land within the past 100 years after the Jews made the land resourceful. The Palestinians claim of having an ethnic birthright to that land is completely false. There has never been a more legitimate birthright than the Jews have to Israel. Throughout all the conquerors in Israel, Jews were dispersed all over the world, but there was never a time that Israel was completely devoid of Jews. In the late 1800s, the Zionist movement began in Europe as a means of creating a safe haven for the persecuted Jews of Europe, where they can live and practice their religion in peace and free from persecution. At this time, nothing was really going on in Israel. It was just a bunch of marshland. The Zionists came into Israel and built it up and made the land resourceful. Even though I don't believe the Palestinians have a right to that land, I understand that they're there and that they're not going anywhere, and I understand they have a right to peace just as all people on Earth. That's why even though people can argue history, and whose land is this, whose land is that, till they're blue in the face, it will do no good. In order to achieve peace, we must understand how things are in the present, let go of old grudges, and assess the current situation.

In a world with about 2 billion Christians, 1 billion Muslims, and 20 million Jews, it's necessary that the Jews have their own country, where they can flourish and live free from persecution. Even though I'm able to accept the Palestinians' right to peace and that they're not leaving, most people in the world, including *MRR*, don't accept Israel's right to peace and the fact that they're not leaving. This is the root cause of all the violence in the Middle East. Just to give you an idea of the horror, and lack of humanity the terrorists incite upon Israel, let me tell you something you may not know. You probably remember the Passover massacre from two years ago, where a Palestinian blew himself up killing about 30 Jews at a Passover Seder. Well, something the media didn't mention was that this Seder was being held specifically for families of terrorist victims. Every person at that Seder had a family member who was already killed by a terrorist. So, the terrorists decided to go blow that up. There can be no peace until the Arab governments and Palestinians accept Israel's right to exist and stop inciting murder against Israelis. I want peace for everyone: Israelis and Palestinians. If

you want peace for everyone also, it is necessary for you to support the end of terrorism against Israel and the need for everyone to accept Israel's right to exist. The more you don't do this, and the more you criticize Israel and spew anti-Israeli slogans and rhetoric, the more you contribute to the bleach that brainwashes the Palestinians into blowing themselves up in Israeli school buses, malls, homes, etc which forces Israel to defend itself. Support peace.

Louis Yoelin
lyoelin@hotmail.com

To begin at the beginning; we did not "grudgingly" agree to print your letter after being "convinced" by Mykel Board—as you know, the original letter you sent in was mistakenly lost. As you also know, because we thought it was important to address these issues publicly, we then went to a whole lot of trouble to find out how to contact you and get a replacement copy of the letter, which included contacting Mykel, who we knew to be in touch with you. At which point, you, sir, changed your mind about submitting your letter, and had to be convinced to resubmit, by Mykel Board.

Since you accuse MRR staffers of not addressing your points, I am going to attempt to address them as systematically as I can. Given that I have space concerns, I will limit my responses to points having to do with political positions; your opinion of the magazine and our supposedly "pro-terrorist" stance is, uh, your opinion. Frankly, I could give a shit what you think; as you yourself said, you're not even a reader. But—like I said, I do think it's important to talk about the other issues raised in your letter. I think it's especially important because most of your arguments are very common and widely considered to be true simply because they've been repeated so many times. So....

Regarding your assertion that "not one bullet has been fired by Israel that wasn't in direct retaliation against terrorism incited against them:" the Israeli claim that its attacks on the Palestinians constitute "self defense" ignores the fact that its positions in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip (which are maintained by the firing of many, many bullets) are, by definition, not defensive. Since 1967, Israel has maintained tens of thousands of heavily armed troops outside its borders in order to further encroach on Palestinian territory, forcing the territories' residents to live as non-citizens under a foreign military dictatorship. Seized Palestinian land has been used to build Jewish-only settlements linked by a network of Jewish-only roads, in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions and the Fourth Geneva Convention. This occupation has been carried out by the violent suppression of any and all Palestinian resistance to it.

As for whether the Palestinians could expect to be "given land and peace" if they laid down their weapons (unlike the Israelis who would be "overrun"—classic racist phrasing) I give you two examples to consider. 1) The years of the "peace process" during the 1990s, during which time, according to Israeli group "Peace Now," Israel continued to construct settlements, in direct violation of terms, doubling the number of settlers in the West Bank. 2) During the month of July 2003, 1,410 truce violations by Israel against Palestinian citizens were recorded, including 299 shell attacks and shootings at residential areas, 332 arrests of Palestinians, 46 new military checkpoints, and over 300 wounded by Israeli bullets. In one month! Furthermore, the offer to "give" land and peace to the Palestinian people is inherently racist—the Palestinian people should not need to wait for the Israeli state to "give" them anything: they are not children but an autonomous people who have lived on the disputed lands for hundreds of years!

You then go on to rant that since the land mass of the Israeli state is quite small (which lots of countries are, viewed through American eyes) it's fucked up that the "Arab government" can't even give that much to "another type of people." Well, I, personally, could not give a rat's ass about the "Arab governments;" the point is that people already lived there when the Jews arrived in the area; in only 5 decades 80% of the Palestinian people have been dispossessed of most or all of their property.

Yet you claim not only that the Palestinians have not been oppressed by the Israeli state, but that they are in fact the oppressors, waging an hourly war of terror against the defenseless Israeli citizens. Is this true? Statistics show that since the Palestinian uprising started in late September 2000, more than 1,500 Palestinians, and 400 Israelis have been killed (as of April, 2002), the vast majority on both sides being unarmed civilians. This strongly suggests that the larger use of deadly force has been committed by Israeli forces and has been directed at Palestinians. Yet we are asked to believe that 400 Israeli civilians were deliberately targeted, while more than three times as many dead Palestinians all somehow just got in the way of what Israel claims is its humane and disciplined army. It is, basically, an argument that 1,500 people all died by accident. Every human rights group that has examined Israel's practices has documented systematic and deliberate use of violence targeted at unarmed Palestinian civilians by Israeli forces. Physicians for Human Rights USA which investigated the high number of Palestinian deaths and injuries in the first months of the Intifada, concluded that: "the pattern of injuries seen in many victims did not reflect Israel Defense Forces use of firearms in life-threatening situations but rather indicated targeting solely for the purpose of wounding or killing." Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch confirm this pattern. Israeli human rights group B'Tselem has documented and condemned the targeted use of violence against Palestinian civilians and has found evidence of systematic torture of thousands of Palestinian detainees, including children.

Is Israel in fact the underdog, and not Palestine, as "people tend to think?" While, yes, some funding is given to Palestinian organizations—does this in any way compare to Israel's US-funded nuclear weapons, air to surface missiles, apache helicopters, etc, etc...?! US-based manufacturer Caterpillar makes a bulldozer that was designed for the express purpose of razing Palestinians' homes! (And, occasionally, people who get in the way, such as Rachel Corrie, who was deliberately run down by an Israeli soldier earlier this year.)

Does this justify attacks on Israeli citizens? Of course not! While it is common to accuse people of taking this position, few people do, including Arafat. While I don't have much interest in arguing for or against Mr. Arafat, the claim that he condemns suicide bombings in English but then presents a different view in his Arabic speeches is a common myth, but, alas, totally untrue. In fact, even before Yasir Arafat's statement on 13 April, 2002 condemning terrorism, he had repeatedly condemned suicide bombings both in Arabic and in English. Here are two examples obtained from BBC monitoring. 1) On Palestinian TV, Mar 2002, Arafat stated in Arabic:

"On this occasion, I would like once again to reiterate our condemnation of yesterday's operation in Netanya, in which a number of innocent Israeli civilians were killed and wounded. This operation constitutes a deviation from our policy and a violation of our national and human values." 2) Dec 2001, in a speech on Gaza Palestine Satellite Channel Television, Arafat stated in Arabic: "Today, I emphasize once again the complete and immediate halt to all armed operations. Once again, I call for a complete halt to all operations, especially suicidal operations, which we have always condemned. We will punish all those who carry out and mastermind such operations."

But what about Hamas and the statement that their mission is to fight until "all the Jews are pushed into the sea?" This common misquote is especially ironic given that during the 1948 war

Israelis literally pushed into the sea hundreds of Palestinian refugees; it is, however, not an actual stated position of Hamas.

But regardless of words, what of the money? You say that the government spends it on weapons rather than "building industry," and therefore it is not the fault of the Israeli state but rather of the Palestinians themselves that they are impoverished! Well, this is of course the classic racist argument; after all, why don't "those people" just get jobs, and "get their minds off the murder they dwell on?" Well, Louis, let's see...first of all, can I say again that that, especially the paranoid statement that "they" "dwell on" "murder" is some really fucked up racist bullshit?! Secondly, jobs aside, people live in poverty not because they don't want to get jobs but because their land, which they lived off of, was taken from them by the Israeli state! And on top of that, neither can they hold jobs, because they are prevented from reaching them by the military checkpoints (you don't suppose the refugee camps are full of opportunities?) not to mention the giant wall which is currently being completed, further restricting Palestinian movement. As for industry and export, aside from the rest of the obstacles it is necessary to overcome to run a profitable business in a war zone, it is common practice for Israeli checkpoints to hold export shipments (primarily produce) until they have spoiled and become worthless.

These are all terrible things. Why, though, do they get more time in this magazine than other human rights abuses? Because, yes: fucked up things happen all over the world. And, actually, I think we do try to address as many of them as we can (given the fact that this is a music magazine!) This situation is different in some ways, though; it is more directly connected to us as US citizens. The Israeli state operates almost entirely on US money ($5.5 million per day, the last time I checked.) That's my tax money! Plus, as US citizens we actually have the power to potentially change government policy, as happened during the 1980s with the South Africa boycott, and many, including myself, feel that it is our responsibility to use our privilege to affect change in these matters. And, speaking for myself, as a Jewish American, I feel a special responsibility not to be blinded by my community's perception of ourselves as a victimized people, to the point that we cannot see that in this case we have also become the victimizers. Additionally, the difference between the fucked up situations in Israel/Palestine and those in a lot of other countries (and not just non-white ones, by the way) ties in, in my opinion, to your next claim, regarding the history of Israel.

The first Jewish settlers in Palestine came in the 1890s. While it is true that these people were refugees fleeing persecution in their home countries, they did not spontaneously come up with the idea of returning to a biblical homeland. Actually, rich British non-Jews with an interest in the region conceived of the idea of sending Jews into the area to achieve a political toehold in the area. This was not a Jewish program in the beginning! They bought ships, outfitted them, advertised the idea throughout Jewish communities, and financed the settlements. This continued for decades. It wasn't until the end of WWII, however, that the program really got off the ground, and soon after we come to the establishment of the Israeli state. While Israel is undeniably now run by and for Jews, it still serves the purpose originally conceived by the British lords who founded the Zionist movement: maintaining a Western political toehold in the Middle East.

It has been said many times (and again by you) that until the Jews arrived, where Israel now is there was "nothing going on." It was "just a bunch of marshland." Well, this just isn't true! Most, if not all, of the Palestinian-Israeli citizens (who constitute 20%-22% of the Israeli population) are farmers who mostly reside in the most fertile Israeli areas, and agriculture was their main profession for hundreds of years prior to Israel's inception in 1948. The mass majority of the Israeli Jews are urban dwellers, mostly concentrated in and around Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, and the Beisan Valley. Actually, Israel has the highest rate of urban dwellers among all industrial nations. As early as 1891, Ahad Ha'Am (a leading Eastern European Jewish essayist) tried to open many Jewish eyes to the fact that Palestine was not a desolate place. He reported upon visiting Palestine for three months in 1891: "We abroad are used to believe the Eretz Yisrael is now almost totally desolate, a desert that is not sowed. But in truth that is not the case. Throughout the country it is difficult to find fields that are not sowed. Only sand dunes and stony mountains are not cultivated."

Does the fact that the Palestinians lived there before the arrival of the Jews mean that they have a right to the land? In Feb., 1937, Ben-Gurion (founder of the Israeli state) said: "The right which the Arabs in Palestine have is one due to the inhabitants of any country...because they live here, and not because they are Arabs ...he Arab inhabitants of Palestine should enjoy all the rights of citizens and all political rights, not only as individuals, but as a national community, just like the Jews." I feel that people should have the right to the land their parents left them, to self-determination, and to be spared the destruction of their communities and traditions. None of these things are possible for the Palestinian people under Israeli rule.

And then we wind it all down with an example of an atrocity. Well, any number of examples of this sort of thing can be pulled out in support of either side, but that isn't really the point. What's being done here is using the popular mass media tactic of citing an isolated incident as justification for going after an entire civilian population; the most obvious example of this being the recent use of Sept. 11 to justify the US led attacks on Iraq, in which thousands of civilians died. "But Palestinians are terrorists," you say? While Palestinian society has spawned many guerilla organizations in response to the daily oppression of the people, it is important to remember that these are not the majority of the population, nor do most Palestinians necessarily support them, and they do not justify the oppression of all.

Racism and oppression are the same wherever they happen. The point is not to unconditionally support the Palestinians or to demonize the Israeli people. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian land is an ongoing atrocity, which makes a mockery of the duty of holocaust survivors and their descendants to make sure that such horrors don't happen again.
—Anandi

MRR—
I'd like to thank you guys for your radio

show. I just got a job in this toddler toyshop in the bar area of Baltimore. Needless to say, no one comes into the shop; listening to your show online is the only thing that keeps me from stabbing myself in the neck out of sheer boredom.

Erict

CORRECTIONS!!!!!

Man, did we fuck up the columns section last month. First off, Mitch Cardwell's column was printed under Mike Taylor's column header. Sorry Mitch! Sorry Mike! But I mean, your first names share the first TWO LETTERS! What do you think we are, rocket scientists? Also, an entire big chunk was cut out of the middle of Bob Suren's back-in-the-day guest column. Sorry Bob! It's a good column and doesn't really make sense without that section, so we're reprinting the whole thing again this month. We'll keep the whipped cream cans out of the office this month, I swear. Thanks.

—Arwen

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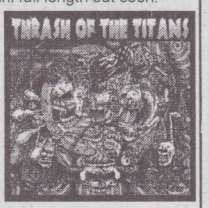

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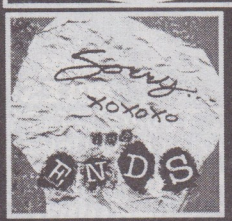

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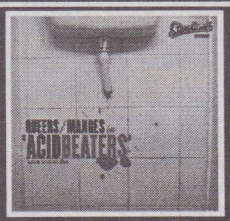

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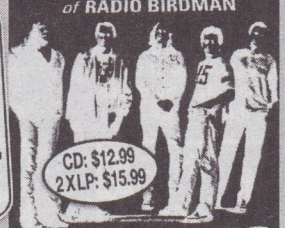

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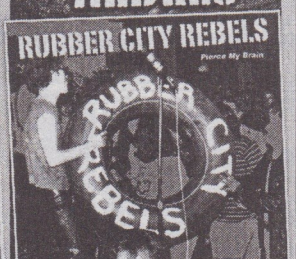

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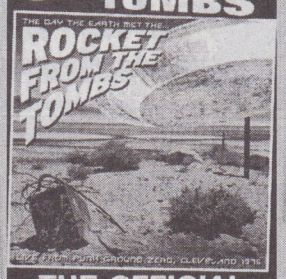

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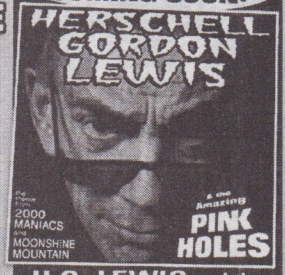

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COLUMNS

I Need Therapy, I Need Therapy, Oh Yeah

So, I fucking yelled at my shrink. Well, maybe not like a full-blown yell, but I was definitely not being nice, and I was a bit worked up. I'd say that's in the yelling family, right? I mean, she understood and all, but still. I don't want to be the prick that's yelling at someone while they are at work? You know? I hate that guy. She's just trying to do her job.

Anyway, I guess this story will make more sense if I back it up about six months. Or you know what? Fuck it; let's back it up a few years.

Back then, whenever the fuck it was, 2000 maybe, I was at a point where I was pretty well fucked. I had a comfort zone of about one fourth of a mile where I felt I was safe to travel. There were parts of my zip code were totally unattainable. It was around the time where one day I went to the end of my driveway to get the mail, and thought, "Jesus, what if I can't get back to my house from here?" I freaked out and ran inside. I was fucked.

So, I started seeing a pretty effective psychologist for my agoraphobia. I did exposure therapy, which is sort of like practicing going places. With my therapist on the phone, I'd venture outside of my perceived safety zones. This, along with relaxation techniques, small changes in my diet, and some regular old talking about stuff with her, I started to improve. I expanded my small bubble by a few hundred percent. Within a few months I was back checking my PO box, getting egg sandwiches at the bagel store, and eating late night at the diner with my pals.

I sort of hit a wall with recovery though. All that shit was great, but I was still not busting out of about five miles around my house. It went that way for months. All along my psychologist had been pushing the idea of medication to aid me in getting over the hump on to my next level of getting better.

I found a psychiatrist. The difference between a psychologist and a psychiatrist is that the latter can actually prescribe medication to you. I went on to meet with a dude who could prescribe me some Celexa; that's what my regular psychologist recommended, so that's what I wanted. This guy was a fucking retard. I'm not sure if he was a jerk or not, because he was just so fucking stupid I couldn't decipher if his incompetence was malicious or just a passive idiocy. Man, what a fucking dolt, though.

This guy barely spoke English. That was fine with me. I needed a medical doctor to examine and monitor my progress on whatever medication he prescribed. You don't need great English for that. However, this fucking numbnuts insisted on setting up monthly hour-long therapy sessions where I talked about my feelings to him. His cursory understanding of the language left him horribly unequipped to understand the nuances of whatever the fuck it was I was talking about.

This went on for a few months. I would leave there enraged that I just had to pay this dimwit almost $200 and put up with him for an hour just so he could write me a prescription. By the fourth visit, I think I'd about had it. I remember wearing a Bones Brigade shirt. You know, the Powell Peralta shirt from the 80s, where the skeleton looks like he's ripping out from the shirt. The first 20 minutes of the session were spent delving into how I felt about wearing skulls on my clothes, if I rode a motorcycle, and if I was scared to one day be a skeleton. Oddly enough, I kinda yelled at this guy too, but it's not the story I'm trying to tell here. I got up from his fancy chair, called him incompetent, and left.

But, Jesus, I'm getting off topic here. After a few more episodes like that with different doctors, I wound up with a good one. She said that she wanted to meet with me once a month for 15 minutes to monitor the medication. She was super helpful and eventually I saw her only every other month. Eventually I asked her if it'd be cool if I could just come every six months, because I wasn't really getting my bang for the buck and I was going to try to put the money toward a nutritionist. She was cool with it.

It was eerie; before I had known it my I was on my last few pills of my last Celexa refill. I guess that's six months. So, I called her up and made an appointment.

After the defeat of a marginally successful but mostly just costly stint at the nutritionist, I was kind of pissed. In fact the cumulative failure of every single method of treatment I'd tried had sort of snapped my will. I was feeling more defeated and depressed than I had in years. It had been about two or three months since the last time I even bothered to think about Agoraphobia, treatment, or an eventual recovery. I'd been avoiding those thoughts by drinking booze and staying out all night. I just tried to keep my nose down and not dream. I had become so cynical and angry, that it all just seemed a waste of time.

So this is the backdrop for walking into this shrink's office. I like her a lot, I really do, but I should have known it wasn't going to go well. I was fucking steaming. I was addressing shit I didn't want to think about and I was pissed. I countered any point she was making with this well-honed nihilist take on mental illness that I'd been working on. I think I kinda had her stumped a few times, without any counter arguments. It's kind of scary feeling you've just laid out a valid argument to your shrink for why you will remain a miserable agoraphobic fuck for the rest of your life.

Anyway, so I rattled off the laundry list of treatment approaches, doctors, therapists, programs, books on tape, and bullshit that I'd been through with basically dick to show for it. Actually, I think I really said "dick" too. I remember being a little embarrassed about it, but mostly just pissed.

She looked at me and said that there was one major therapy that had been basically overlooked.

"Oh yeah?' I said.

"Yeah," she said, "psychotherapy."

I knew what it was, but to be a smart ass I asked what it would entail.

She explained, "We'd have weekly sessions where you came in and we discussed your feelings and thoughts, we'd explore things from your past that may have led to your situation now."

I was fucking beside myself. I guess I shouldn't have been, and looking back it doesn't really seem like a normal reaction, but I was fucking pissed.

"And this would cost what?" I asked her

"The normal session fee," she said, "175 dollars."

Now, my insurance doesn't cover this shit, so when she

says 175 dollars she fucking means it.

"Do you have any faith at all that me coming here for an hour every week to talk about my feelings is going to have any significant effect on my agoraphobia and depression?" I said starting to get visibly pissed.

"No," she calmly responded.

"So," now I'm fucking pissed, "you want me to basically give you $700 a month to come down here a few times and gab with you about stuff?"

"Well…" she started to say.

I interrupted her, "There is no real reason to believe I'd benefit from this at all, right?"

"No, probably not," she said.

I could feel that my fucking face was beet red by this point, "OK, can you prescribe me my Celexa so I can leave?"

I probably wasn't yelling but I was pissed enough that it probably fell squarely in the yelling family as far as modes of speech go. I got my prescription and took the walk of shame over to the receptionist to pay. The doctor could tell that I was kind of embarrassed.

She said, "We'll get a crack at you next time."

Still kind of pissed, I smiled and said, "Maybe *I'll* crack before next time."

So, I left with my prescription and the overwhelming realization that my new "ignore it and it will go away" attitude wasn't working. In a few short months with that philosophy I'd spiraled into a level of bitterness and cynicism that was just unbearable.

The past couple of weeks since the appointment I've been working on losing the cynicism. I actually lost the prescription too, which means I had to have the office call it in. It also means, that I didn't get any refills, so I'll probably head back to the shrink next month. I'll get to pay 175 bucks to go apologize and try to figure out how to get better.

Two Grown Men on the Internet Talking about Love

There's a guy I know from Boston named Casey. He runs a slightly thriving, but mostly crappy sounding record label called Iodine Recordings. There's actually a record by a band called JERICHO RVA coming out soon that doesn't sound that bad, but I'm pretty sure that's a rarity on his roster. Anyway, he's my dude. I don't like many people, especially sniveling record label guys from Boston, but he's OK. I know him mostly from work, but we've hung out in real life a couple of times. We've even had some heart-to-hearts about life, mental illness, punk, and other shit. Our main method of communication is the dreaded AOL Instant Messenger.

So, today was the day that I found out that Stacy is getting married. She was my last real girlfriend. My friend Sarah told me. I tried my best to stay on the phone and not bum out, but ultimately I gave up. I said goodbye, hung up and sulked. Actually, I'm still sulking. This literally happened about ten minutes ago. Jeez.

So anyway, I'm working on my column when all this goes down. So, I hop on the Instant Messenger as some sort of distraction. The only soul I see on there is this Casey guy. I lay into him about love. I'm mostly bummed out over my string of failed two-week relationships, while this Stacy thing is just punctuating and aggravating it. He obliges and starts dropping wisdom on me. Casey's initial thoughts were, "Love is hard but you need the affection more and more, it's like heroin." I heard where he was coming from; I had some choice words about snuggling. I relayed my fear that I'd ruined sex, that I'd never be able to associate it with love again. So, Casey dropped the nugget that I will ultimately cling to tonight before I go to sleep. "Dude, when you love a girl its fucking way different." Thanks Casey Iodine, you're a fucking scholar among us. He said he had to run off and work at the steakhouse, so I was on my own after that.

I guess its not all that bad though. Now I get to feel like I'm the ex-boyfriend character in one of those SCREECHING WEASEL songs about a girl growing up, getting married, and moving to the suburbs. Also, now I have that great mental image of Casey Iodine, not only having sex… but making love. Perfect.

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My Name Is Lubrano is done! It's a collection of the first 15 columns I did for *MaximumRockNRoll*. It's like 75 pages long and has all the columns plus shitty punk layouts and pictures of stuff like MANOWAR, Lubrano, Fran Drescher, Beaker, pills, MINUTEMEN, traffic, record pressing machinery, prosthetic forearms, and much more. It's available on a sliding scale price of $3-$6 ppd. directly from me at the address below.

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We'd get drunk and pogo: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or e-mail me at manowells@hotmail.com.

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END NOTES:

1. I've been listening to a CD my pal Mark Enoch gave me. It's a record he put out by that band THE TRAVOLTAS. I generally don't like stuff at all, but I really got into this one song "One For The Road." I think it's track 6. It's mint. I could do with out the BEACH BOYS covers though. Mark's website is www.knockknockrecords.com.
2. Look out for big news on for The Punk Rocker Mental Illness Pen Pal Network next month. Err, maybe two months.
3. There's a band parading around Long Island called MAN IS THE MONSTER and they're not even a MAN IS THE BASTARD cover band. Boo!
4. Burn It Down/Rebuild is a new label releasing Long Island DIY stuff. It's run by Jesse from KIWI, Jon Berg who used to be in CONTRA and is now in SOLIDARITY PACT, and Philbo Baggins from the mighty LATTERMAN. They've got a few records out already, and more on the way. Check them out on the Internet at http://burnitdownrebuild.cjb.net.
5. I had the sickest dream that MANOWAR took a commercial out on television warning power metal bands not to sound like 7 SECONDS. It was so mint and vivid. I thought it was fucking real until about noon today. Weird.
6. I just got the 20th anniversary issue of *Suburban Voice* in the mail this week. It's a totally rad issue, but holy crap! 20 years? Congratulations. That magazine is just fucking mint.

He has canceled elections in Iraq. He will probably cancel them in Afghanistan. Will George W. Bush put the kibosh on elections in the United States next year?

That's the big question buzzing around progressive political circles. Even the most cynical pundits, journalists, and activists wouldn't give this nightmare scenario a passing thought under normal circumstances. But things no longer seem normal. The thuggish manner in which the current administration seized power in 2000, combined with its radical unraveling of the Bill of Rights and a knack for getting its way no matter what, have led some progressives to worry that Bush might suspend the 2004 race as a prelude to dictatorship. They've read a similar tale before—it was set in Germany in 1933—and they don't like the part where they end up wearing grey in a prison camp. "I don't even mind if the Democrats get stomped next year," a writer who despises Bush tells me. "I expect that. So long as they lose because the elections actually take place, I'll be happy."

Frightened by Bush's rapidly accruing personal power and the Democrats' inability and/or unwillingness to stand up to him, panicked lefties worry that he might use the "war on terrorism" as an excuse to declare a state of emergency, suspend civil liberties, and jail political opponents.

People who have spoken out against Bush are talking exit strategy—not Alec Baldwin style, just to make a statement, but fleeing the US in order to save their skins. "Do you or your spouse have a European-born parent?" is a query making the rounds. (If you do, you can obtain dual nationality and a European Union passport that would allow you to work in any EU member nation.) Those whose lineage is 100 percent American are hoping that nations like Canada and France will admit American political refugees in the event of a Bushite clampdown.

To these people, whether or not the 2004 elections actually take place as scheduled is the ultimate test for American democracy. At Guantánamo Bay the United States is converting a concentration camp into a death camp where inmates will be executed without due process or legal representation. Never before in history has a US president contemplated the denaturalization of native-born citizens—thus far even people executed for treason have died as Americans—but Bush has drafted legislation that would allow him to strip anyone he calls an "enemy combatant" of their citizenship and have them deported. By any objective standard he has already gone way too far, but for many it would take the cancellation or delay of the elections to confirm that we are trading in our wounded democracy for a fascist state.

Lincoln considered suspending the 1864 election because of the Civil War, but ultimately tabled the idea. To date nothing has ever prevented an American presidential election from being held on time.

It's easy to come up with a scenario in which canceling the 2004 election could be made to appear reasonable. Imagine that, a few weeks before Election Day, "dirty bombs" detonate simultaneously in New York and Washington. Government, media and political institutions lie ruined in smoking rubble and ash; thousands of people are dying of radiation poisoning. The economy, already teetering on the precipice, is shoved into depression. How could we conduct elections under such conditions?

Republicans have already floated the don't-change-horses-in-midstream argument. After Democratic presidential contender Sen. John Kerry criticized Bush recently, GOP National Committee Chairman Mark Racicot took him to task not for his specific remarks, but rather for "daring to suggest the replacement of America's commander-in-chief at a time when America is at war." The White House website's "frequently asked questions" section indicates that the "war" is expected to continue well beyond 2004: "There is no silver bullet, no single event or action that is going to suddenly make the threat of terrorism disappear. This broad-based and sustained effort will continue until terrorism is rooted out. The situation is similar to the Cold War, when continuous pressure from many nations caused communism to collapse from within. We will press the fight as long as it takes."

The Cold War lasted 46 years; does Bush intend to remain in office that long?

Our boy president has plenty of reason to worry about his election chances. A CNN-*USA Today*-Gallup poll says that only 50 percent of Americans would vote for Bush over a generic unnamed Democrat—the lowest number since 9/11. Two-thirds say that Bush lied about or exaggerated the threat from Iraq's WMDs, and a steady flow of body bags from Afghanistan and Iraq has made 53 percent aware that the occupations are going poorly. Pollsters report that most people trust Democrats to rescue the sinking economy—and few believe that Bush's tax cuts will help them.

Bush may be the kind of guy who sees 99 percent odds as 2 percent short of a sure thing, but I bet he'll look at his $200 million campaign war chest and decide to let the people decide. He'll surely want to win legitimately in 2004—albeit for the first time. Though they're capable of anything, Bush's people probably know that Americans wouldn't stand for two putsches in four years. Still, you have to hand it to him: The fact that Democrats are terrified of ending up imprisoned by an American Reich is the ultimate tribute to Bush's artful bullying—and sad confirmation of the impotence of his would-be, should-be opponents.

NEW PAPERBACK: My 140-page book *To Afghanistan and Back* is finally coming out in September in paperback form. *Afghanistan* contains a 50-page graphic novella (long comic) about my experiences dodging bombs and bullets during the US invasion of Afghanistan, as well as a dozen articles I filed from the war zone. The new paperback is updated and revised with an additional chapter discussing media coverage of the war, and it's just $9.95. If you want me to sign one for you, please send $14.00 (includes shipping within the US only—no overseas orders please) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108.

"But people can't, unhappily, invent their mooring posts, their lovers, and their friends, anymore than they can invent their parents. Life gives these and takes them away and the great difficulty is to say Yes to Life."

—James Baldwin, *Giovanni's Room*

Pt. I: Trust in Fate

I realized what was wrong when I looked out the window as we were entering Brussels, with it's cutesy ancient buildings covered with moss and old men with huge bellies and no shirts looking out their windows, and these incredible gardens and people on bikes. I realized that Paris lives so heavily in its history, it's dead, there is no present, it's like you are always walking through a museum. Everything I went to see there is something that is over. I went to cafes when some writers I admire used to hang out when they were young and starving and angry at the whole world so they were living in Paris. And it really is such an utterly lonely city, it makes you ache and realize how fragile one person is compared to this imposing helmet of history. I came to Amsterdam because I was finally feeling my despair; I was beginning to believe that we are all forever really alone. It is wild to me, how similar we all are, and how we can begin to seem so different.

So here I am, in a café, and let me tell you about Amsterdam: first of all, thankfully, this is one place in Europe where people, including women, have tattoos. When I got here a few hours ago, I had no idea what to expect, I didn't know if the train stopped in the city or on the edge of town. European cities tend to have the train stations in the center of town. The yards were built in what used to be the outskirts, but the cities have grown and the edge of town has been absorbed into the center of town. Fortunately, this is true of Amsterdam.

I got off the train and I thought what the hell, I hope I figure this out. I am not a traveler. Actually I think the first thing I did when I got to town was email Arwen about how I thought I should be like one those old men in New York who never leaves Manhattan, because, "My city has all I need." She didn't think it was a good plan.

I walked around the streets of the tourist area in Amsterdam that is adjacent to the Red Light District, and I looked for the punks. I saw a boy and a girl, both with pink mohawks, holding hands. I followed them for a few blocks, observed their anarcho-punk patches, and said excuse me, do you speak English? I'm looking for the punks. As tactics go, mine was pretty pathetic.

Two of my friends knew this guy named *Jan* (pronounced "yawn" and actually the equivalent of "Jon" in Amsterdam). Actually I sort of knew him too. He'd bought my fanzine from me when I was the Subtonix's roadie at a show in New Orleans two years ago. That fall he'd written me a letter about how the

dumpstered photo of a married couple on the cover of it made him think of heroin and how they must not be together anymore. It was a great letter. I never wrote him back. Now I was asking two punk rock sweethearts if they knew some squatter named Jan. They were tourists, the girl informed me. They didn't know anyone.

The next people who I accosted were crusty hippie traveler kids who could have been squatters. They wanted a light from me; I didn't have one. I asked if they knew Jan, they didn't. I asked where the punk rockers hung out. They said they didn't know. "Maybe the Red Light District," said one guy, and he started twirling those weird hippie sticks for the tourists.

I gave up. I was gonna find a hostel and then go write by myself at a café. Maybe I'd find the kids tomorrow. I was surrounded by shit made of plastic and tourists eating old pizza; just like out here in SF; the pizza places near the bars always sell old pizza that's been under a heatlamp all night. They try to hide the cold grease under a little fresh cheese. I was thinking about coffee. Then there in front of me was this skinny black-haired boy in an ancient Nation of Ulysses t-shirt. It was such an odd, classic moment. I walked up to him. "Do you know Jan?" "Jan?" he asked me with a thick British accent. This is how it took me all afternoon to realize that Jan was such a common name; everyone I asked reacted as though they'd never heard the name before. He didn't know Jan, but he was a squatter, he lived in the queer punk squat, down the street in the Red Light District. He said I could come by later for their café.

Pt. II : The Pink Lighthouse

I am in Amsterdam at the first queer squat to be open here in seven years. They are playing early 90s girl punk and I feel sane again, energized by the splendor of punk rock. I came over here with plums and a copy of *Giovanni's Room.* Rad to imagine all these kids reading my old copy of that book. Some of their housemates are out of town so I tend bar for a few hours. It's so nice; everyone is hanging out in this beautiful pink squat, people are dancing, and everyone argues about politics. I go to sleep on the couch in the bar, wearing earplugs and a blindfold.

I wake up and meet all the kids from Spain who are staying in the upstairs of the squat. They make a Spanish omelet with potatoes. There's bread and marinated tofu and homefries. We sit around, and they explain to me the social ramifications of the European Union.

Writers the Kids from Barcelona Said I Should Read:

Fernando Pessoa, novelist/poet from Portugal in the 1930s. Librede?

John dos Pasos, novelist and playwright.

As I was Reading:

"It was the reflection of my face. Often in those lost days I study it. I can understand nothing of this face. The faces of others have some sense, some direction. Not mine. I cannot even decide whether it is handsome or ugly. I think it ugly because I have been told so. But it doesn't strike me. At heart, I am even shocked that anyone can attribute qualities of this kind to it, as if you called a clod of earth or a block of stone beautiful or ugly."—Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*

For information about the Pink Lighthouse, read *Scam #5*, the upcoming issue of Iggy Scam's timeless fanzine. I'm going to hopefully interview in-depth. Or email them directly at pinklight@squat.net.

MRR covers a considerable enough breadth of the infinitesimally small sliver of cultural minutiae known as The Punk Rock that no one who's at all familiar with the magazine expects to be pleased or even *interested* in the whole magazine. This is neither news nor surprising.

However, in last month's issue I came across an ad for a band called Me First and the Gimme-Gimmes which really fucking constipated me. It's the one where all the dudes in the band are all decked out in retro cocktail suits, I guess rat-pack style is the connotation, all breakdancing while one of them mans the beat box. I've since been told while complaining about this band that the guy at the radio is Fat Mike, of NOFX and Fat Wrecks fame. OK. Whatever. It's kind of a silly/funny-ish photograph, except that it says, "It's Black History Month all year with Me First and the Gimme-Gimmes!" Now *come on!* Isn't that kind of...well, *stupid?* And yeah, I know, blah blah, punk rock is supposed to be stupid blah blah don't take it so seriously yeah I know, all right? But you guys are probably...and oh yeah, I'm talking directly to the band now, by the way; You guys are probably fairly smart—humor is an intelligence in many of its forms, and Fat Wreck Chords is a successful label, which takes smarts, yes. So I'm assuming you know exactly who to market your records to, and how best to sell them. It doesn't take a genius to know that teenage skater boys who attend the Warped Tour, as a demographic, think light racism, tit jokes, etc., are pretty fuckin' funny. And no, I'm not dismissing these people, because I know the difference between malevolence and thoughtlessness. But why pander? And why accept bullshit, bottom-rung standards? Teenagers are *not* stupid (forever), and it's a disservice to assume the lowest common denominator.

Anyway. I guess *Take a Break* is a record of covers of R&B songs. I guess that doesn't make a difference to me. Silly idea. I can't believe the money that goes into making this a lifestyle. Fat Mike is the Rodney Dangerfield of professional punks. I did some snooping and found a video for one of the songs off this record, and it looks to have Jello Biafra and Jerry Brown in it! *That*, to me, is funny. Not in the snooty way, but really; has Jerry Brown heard the version of "California Uber Alles" where he gets slammed? Did he and Jello talk about it, snort their heads off over a beer? If anyone reading this was at that video shoot, please tell me!

As an amusing side note and a interesting glance into the kind of impression "we" are making, skate down to your local library and check out *Ego Trip's Big Book of Racism*, a thick book compiled by *Ego Trip* magazine, brimming with lists, most humorous, many not, of embarrassingly glaring examples of public racism. The only mention of punk rock in the book Is under "Most Racist Records," where NOFX's *White Trash, Two Heebs and a Bean* gets checked not only for racially essentializing not one, but three ethnic groups right there in the title. Now given, I assume *Ego Trip* isn't too knowledgeable of the vast selection of fine white power record labels and bands with non-humorous outright hate messages, but those records don't have the audience, distribution, or media saturation that NOFX enjoys. Or maybe I'm wrong. Would somebody check up on that for me?

However, I guess it's this kind of hairsplitting that's not really gonna inch us any closer to living in any kind of humane world, right? The people of California get to live the fantasy this month, choosing among Gary Coleman, Gallagher, Jack Grisham of TSOL, and I guess Arnold Schwartzenegger for governor, while the Free Trade Area of the Americas is being hosted by the fine city of Miami, surrounded by throngs of county, state, and federal troopers fighting the leftist "padded bloc" for the fate of third world workshop nation sovereignty. I know we don't have to live in a state of *Profane Existence* grim resistance all the time, thankfully, but it's not much more fun to continually have this 1980s punk-on-the-beach ostrich escapism shoved down my throat, either.

Anyway, you can write me at Mike Taylor, PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908. I do a zine called *Heinous Growth* that you can order for $12. It's printed on plywood.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The column printed under *Mike's* header last month was actually written by *Mitch.* Mike didn't write a column last month. Just keeping things lively!)

Positive Numbers Festival 2003 Report

This title was all I could come up with to describe my four-day venturous voyage across 3,000 miles to attend a hardcore festival in Kingston, Pennsylvania. What a pathetic attempt at a title. After all, this wasn't just a show. This was a weekend-long hardcore extravaganza filled with peril, suspense, and a most certain death by cinnamon (I'll explain later). It was a celebration of all things straight edge, hardcore, and sometimes stupid (no, they are not one and the same, asshole). And yet still, all I could come up with was the title above. So I say forget that title. The new and improved title is:

2003: A Positive Festival Odyssey

Sweet title eh? All right, now that we have that out of the way, we can move on to the fun stuff.

Thursday, July 10th

Getting to the fest is of course half the adventure. Especially when you've promised your band that you're going to sell demos at the fest, and it's three hours before your flight leaves and you still need to make 100 covers and lyric sheets. To make things worse, I hadn't slept, because I was printing out the new cover artwork that I had just picked up from the artist the night before. So things weren't looking too good when I carted my zombie-ass into Kinko's. But with the help of my good friend and fellow traveling companion, Buford (yes, that's his real name), we were able to beat the clock and copy and cut out all 100 OUR TURN demo covers in the nick of time. Matter of fact, we thought we were *so* ahead of schedule, that we decided to give California a signature send-off by attending In-N-Out Burger for a quick…well, in and out. After waiting in a pretty long drive-thru line, I quickly realized that a) their name is profoundly misleading, and b) animal style grilled-cheese sandwiches kick ass. Soon after devouring a vegan's worst nightmare, Buford and I realized that we might not make our flight. In retrospect, he says this was all my fault for insisting that we eat first. But since I forgot to call ahead for a vegetarian meal on the non-stop flight to Newark, and had yet to eat anything, I wanted something in my stomach. Fast-forward to us standing in the back of the security line with our stomachs full; ten minutes before our flight leaves. Luckily, Buford had the sense to show his ticket to the security attendant so we could jump ahead in line. After barely making our flight, we spent the next five hours folding and stuffing covers and inserts for 100 demos on the fold-down tray tables. And sure enough, when dinner came, I was forced to trade my meatloaf sandwich for Buford's small salad and crackers. Arriving in New Jersey at 1:00 in the morning, we had no choice but to get ripped off by Budget Car Rental for their only available "drop-off" car, which happened to be a full sized sedan costing us a total of $120 per day. "Drop off" means that we don't have to bring it back to the place that we rented it. With the car being so expensive, we decided to complete the three-hour drive to Kingston and spend the night in a McDonald's parking lot.

Friday, July 11th

After getting little to no sleep in the Hyundai (full-size, my ass), we were finally ahead of schedule. Since all the clothes I had packed were dirty, Buford and I went to a laundromat in the neighboring town of Wilkes Barre (home of last year's Posi-Fest). It was there that we talked briefly with some of the guys from FAR FROM BREAKING. After pumping endless amounts of quarters into a dryer that did everything but dry, I put on some wet socks and pants. So with socks and pants clinging to my skin, we took off for the fest. Upon arriving at the venue, I quickly noticed that it was being held at large hall connected directly to a fire station. Not good. I imagined the fire officials walking in while kids were killing themselves to the likes of TERROR or NO WARNING and freaking out. Thankfully, everything went off without a hitch, and no one received so much as a verbal warning for walking in the street. However, a lot of weird looks and the occasional shaken head were given. The inside of the actual hall didn't seem as spacious as last year, but it was definitely much larger than your average VFW or Knight of Columbus hall. The stage was very short, and the floor looked like it could get slippery if/when large amounts of sweat were added to it. Then there were the separate back rooms where bands and labels set up their merch tables.

Unlike the rest of the days, the show on Friday started in the early evening and had fewer bands. Personally, the highlights for me that night were the A-TEAM, STRIKING DISTANCE (who did an awesome cover of DEAD KENNEDYS' "Looking Forward to Death"), DESPERATE MEASURES (who played a lot of songs off their up-coming LP on Youngblood), and SUICIDE FILE. The other bands were either too boring to mention or I was helping Sean at the Youngblood Records table and didn't bother to watch them. It's also worth mentioning that this was the only day the PA speakers were set up in front of the stage. After people were consecutively jumping off them (a line was actually starting to form on both sides of the stage), the promoter thought it better to move them behind the stage for the following nights. After the show, James from LIGHTS OUT and his girlfriend Amanda offered to follow us back to Scranton Airport to drop off the albatross that was our rental car. A big thanks goes out to them for being so patient while Buford and I drove around for a couple hours looking for the airport.

Saturday, July 12

To Be Continued... It's 2:30 am, and I have to leave in four hours to drive down to Sink With California Festival. But I'll leave you guys with a top ten list and some endnotes.

Top Ten Things Picked Up at Posi Numbers

RIGHTEOUS JAMS demo on Lockin' Out Records
VIOLENT MINDS 7" on My War
FAR FROM BREAKING 7" on Youngblood
Fuck You Fanzine issues #5, 6
MENTAL 7" on Bridge 9
STOP AND THINK Both Demos LP on Painkiller
A-TEAM t-shirt that says "Control Your Baby" with a fist about to punch a baby. I haven't worn it in public…yet.
Lockin' Out Records Fanzine issue #2
Look Beyond Fanzine #2
STAND AND FIGHT new 7" on Bridge 9.

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ENDNOTES:

Other titles considered for this column but didn't make the cut: **Eyes Wide Awake, Full Posi Jacket (because most metal sucks)**, and **Dr. Strangefest or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Posi.**

A shout out to the young Russian kid that was all by himself at the fest. I hope he came away with an affirmative impression of the whole weekend.

A big thanks goes out to Robby Redcheeks for letting us stay at the DB23 headquarters and showing us around Philly.

I love San Francisco, and I love California (even if the Terminator becomes governor).

The OUR TURN demo is still for sale, but not for long. We are taking all but a few to sell at Sink With Cali Fest. Send $3 US/$5 World to the address at the end of this column.

Can someone please tell me, what the hell is Friendster?

***

Send hate mail about my procrastination to: Neck, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. I'm going to bed!

Saddam of Sodom

I believe that President George W. Bush intentionally mispronounces the first name of Saddam Hussien. I decided this when I watched a history of the Iraqi dictator on the Discovery Channel. They replayed some archival footage from the first Gulf War. In this footage, the *former* President Bush *always* pronounced the name as "Sa-DAHM." He put an emphasis on the soft "ah" sound. That pronunciation used to be the only pronunciation I'd ever heard. But have you noticed the current President Bush and his staff pronounce the name as "Sodom?"

Technically *both* of these pronunciations are wrong. Native *Arabic* speakers use the soft "ah" sound, and they *also* use a very slight double "d" sound.

"Sahd-dahm."

The double "d" is almost imperceptible when they say the name quickly, but it's there, nevertheless.

Whether it's there or not though, "Sa-dahm" is far closer to being accurate than "Sodom."

Interesting isn't it? I mean, why does George W. Bush pronounce it as "Sodom" when his *father* always used an almost perfect pronunciation? Not only that, but why do all of George W.'s staff (and almost everyone in the mainstream media) copy his mispronunciation? Have all of these people coincidentally developed the exact the same enunciation problem? What a sudden, mysterious phenomenon! Perhaps linguists should study this!

Do you know what? I suspect this administration deliberately uses the word "Sodom" instead of the name "Saddam." I doubt that it's an accident. I believe that George W. Bush wants Americans to subliminally associate Saddam Hussien with "sodom" because it's a word that brings to mind all sorts of biblical condemnations. In bible-talk, Sodom equals abominations so horrendous that God had to obliterate them from the face of the earth.

On Main Street USA, the word "Sodom" has lost none of its power to conjure a picture of disgusting depravity. Saddam Hussein *is* disgusting and depraved, but that's no reason to mispronounce his name. Especially when so many Americans now incorrectly associate the word "Sodom" with the word "gay." To be called a "sodomite" is not flattering, in spite of the recent Supreme Court decision which declared sodomy laws unconstitutional. When Bush replaces the name "Saddam" with "Sodom" he wants Americans to associate Saddam with the sodomites. I don't know if he cares whether Americans also begin to unconsciously associate gays with Saddam. So many of them already associate gays with all kinds of other atrocities so why not lump us in with the evilest man alive, too?

I remember shortly after the Supreme Court decision on sodomy was announced, I saw a television news report about Pat Robertson and how he prayed for God to "replace" (in other words kill) three Supreme Court justices. Robertson didn't say which ones but I kinda *doubt* it was Rehnquist, Thomas, and Scalia. The sodomy story was immediately followed by a story about Saddam. I half expected the anchorman to smoothly transition the stories. "Moving right along from one "Sodom" to another, here's a story from Iraq…"

The only thing that brings me hope about all of this is that when I talk to real people on the street I don't hear them use the word "Sodom" when they mean to say "Saddam." I may not speak Arabic, but as a matter of principle, if I ever *do* encounter someone who uses George W. Bush's pronunciation, I'm going to have to transform myself into some sort of Professor Henry Higgins from *My Fair Lady.*

"It's not "Sodom." It's "Sa dahm. Now repeat!"

"Sa dahm."

" *By George (W,)* I think you've got it!!"

Gay Marriage Ban

There are some on the queer radical left that don't believe gay people should get married. To them, the "normalization" or "assimilation" of queers is offensive. They claim to prefer sexual outlaw status. They don't believe in gay marriage or gays in the military, or gays having children, or gays doing anything that straight people do. I think it's fine for them to feel that way. The problem I have with them though is they want to be the ones who make the final decision about how all gays should live. The only difference between them and Bush is that Bush actually has the power to make the decision. At the end of July, Bush declared he'd do whatever he can to ensure that gays will never be able to marry. I suppose that will make some radical queers very happy, but it does not please me. My partner and I have been waiting for years to get married. What makes Bush think he's so much better than me that *he* should be allowed to marry the person he loves but I can't?

Why shouldn't a gay couple have the same legal rights as any heterosexual couple? If gays were allowed to marry:

- Who would it harm?
- How could it ever affect any heterosexual marriage?
- What would change for heterosexuals who are married to each other?
- Why should it make a heterosexual couple's marriage mean something less to them?

When heterosexuals talk about "defending" the institution of marriage, they talk as if gays want to destroy heterosexual marriages, rather than participate in their own.

Yes, there are *some* radical lefties who *don't* believe in gay marriage and who don't even think straights should get married. They see the entire concept of marriage as archaic. So what? People can believe whatever they want to believe. If *they* don't want to get married then *they* don't have to. But, they shouldn't be allowed to make decisions about how *others* can live their lives. That's what I find appalling about Bush. I'm disgusted that Bush believes he's right to deny me my equality. He may have to power to deny it, but he'll never be right to do so.

What makes Bush so superior to me that *he* should have special rights? Imagine if the shoe were on the other foot and gay people were the vast majority? How would Bush like it if *we* passed a Constitutional Amendment that declared it illegal for him to ever marry the person he loves?

When I was in the hospital with a severe eye injury, they wouldn't let my boyfriend in to see me on the grounds that he is "not family." If I had been a heterosexual male with a wife they would never have dared forbidding my married spouse to enter. Is that fair?

If a heterosexual couple were married for one day before one of them died, the government would allow the surviving partner to claim social security. But I can be in my relationship for 15 years and if I die, my partner would never be allowed to get those benefits. Is that fair?

Heteros can flaunt how easily *they* can marry. They'll legally marry complete strangers if they win game shows like *The Bachelor,* and *The Bachelorette,* and *Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire?* and *Who Wants to Marry My Dad?* and *Joe Millionaire.* But I am in a relationship with someone I genuinely love, and I cannot legally marry him. Is that fair?

I watched a cable TV news program where the host hypothetically asked if gays would be willing to compromise on unions that would grant equal rights, but weren't actually called "marriages." Is that one little word what it takes to make heteros feel better about themselves? Is that what it takes to allow them to maintain the illusion of heterosexual supremacy? Is that all it takes to convince them that the love they feel for *their* spouses means something so much deeper than the love we feel for ours? If this "compromise" is all that it takes, then so be it. It's only another glaring example of a society that claims to be based

upon equality but insists upon denying it.

Heteros can (and do) get married in hot air balloons, underwater, at hot dog stands, and on roller coasters. There is nowhere I can go in this nation where I may obtain a legal marriage license for my partner and myself. Some people say, "but gay marriages are now legal in Canada, so you can move there to get married." But, why should we *have to* fly off to some other country to get married? We're Americans.

And why is it so hard for so many hetero Americans to understand?

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Since when does Anonymous Boy like "Spoken Word" records?

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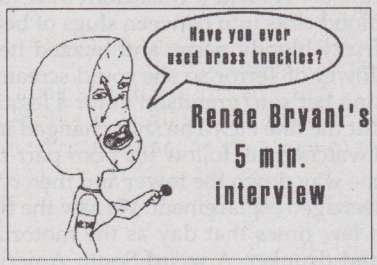
Speaking of homos, Mark Telfian of the straight edge homocore band LIMPWRIST has a wonderful spoken word single out with Mark McCoy of THE OATH on the other side. Mark McCoy's side is in Czech so I can't understand a word he says. But Mark Telfian's side is terrific! I'm someone who normally doesn't go for the "spoken word" kinda thing, but something about this one is cool and fun. Unfortunately, it's limited to only 1,000 copies so if you want it, act fast. I think this record is just plain great and really different. I think it's on the Gloom label, but I got mine from Vital Music Records, www.vitalmusic.net



OK, I am a huge fan of horror movies. I grew up spending at least one weekend night of my mom's single mother years watching horror movies with her. I saw my first horror movie at five years old. It was the *Trilogy of Terror* starring Karen Black. I can still perfectly remember that damn little voodoo doll chasing Karen Black around her house, trying to kill her. I have a vivid picture of her etched in my memory possessed by that damn doll. The doorbell rings. The camera pans on her back. She's crouched down low. She's holding something in her hand. The camera pans to show the front of her body. Aaaaaaaaaaaaah!!! She's possessed. The next horror flick I watched was *Jaws*. My mom and I would make a bowl of popcorn and we'd watch the latest Dracula film on the late night horror show.

Throughout the 80s I must have seen every horror movie that came out:; *Basket Case 1, 2, 3, Halloween, The Entity, Friday the 13th*, etc. Then my favorite genre: the zombie film. *Night of the Living Dead* scared the crap out of me. I had nightmares for days. It was all about Romero. I saw every fucking brain-eating zombie movie out then. Somewhere deep inside my childhood psyche, I thought perhaps one day, the dead would rise from the graves like in some religious verse from Revelations. My all time favorite horror series is *Hellraiser*. I have a fetish for Pinhead. I have three framed 8' by 10' film stills of him in my living room. The Cenobites are back from the dead, leather-clad sm/bd, straight from hell. Well, *Hellraiser* has found competition. It's rare that you find a horror movie that tries to make a social commentary. So of course I have a new favorite horror movie: *28 Days Later*. This movie is scary and thought-provoking. Go get scared now—by something other than the Republicans.

Speaking of Republicans, I have a new principal. Back in December I heard that my principal was going to be given a brand new school (a promotion). I would have applied to the new school but it turned out to be in an affluent neighborhood ($400,000 homes affluent). Since my calling is to teach economically disadvantaged children, transferring wasn't an option. We found out in April who our new principal was going to be. He is a conservative, misogynistic, domineering, Harvest Church-attending, born-again Christian. I knew things were going too good to be true. I earned my Teacher of the Year title at the district to be giving the most difficult administrator. Great. People within the district are already telling me to be careful. Great. A mentor in the district, who knows him personally, told me she could never work for him. Great. Others say, "Oh, Bryant's going to have a hard time." Great. He already found out that I'm in a punk band. Oh, yeah, I was going to try to keep that hush hush. It turns out the he has a student at his school "who wears a Dead Kennedys shirt" who saw my band when we volunteered at the Fender Museum's Red Ribbon Week Battle of the Bands. I was the emcee. All or Nothing HC played while the judges were tallying their votes. We only played four songs, but it was enough for a few hundred teens from local schools to see Ms. Bryant fronting her hardcore punk band with her tattoos hanging out. Great. I explained to my new principal the purpose of the event. I told him how important I thought it was to be there encouraging the teens to partake in music but stay alcohol, tobacco and drug-free. I could say it as an adult who actually practices what she preaches. He didn't comment further, but I could tell he was a little disturbed. It should be an interesting year. I'm trying to make up for my punk by wearing nylons, skirts, and Mary Janes daily. We'll see if it works. So far, so good. I know how to play the game. Fuck it anyway, it's about the kids. I just have to keep that in mind.

So it was the Fourth of July, and I told myself that I was going to stay home all day. Of course my friend called and invited me over for a BBQ. Now I don't really hang out with this friend much because 1) he's my ex-boyfriend, and 2) he likes to go out and drink, a lot. He's a good friend, though, and I felt like I should go. I made my homemade salsa and went. We had pollo asada, beans, and rice. It was quite tasty. We settled in to watch *Girls Behaving Badly*. A segment featured an African-American man getting pranked by his Asian fiancée. One of the guys at the BBQ commented, "Don't do it," as the women went in to kiss the man. Then his friend commented, "Oh, it's OK, she was Asian."

I couldn't believe what I was hearing. So, I straight-out asked, "Are the two of you racist?"

One didn't say anything. The other commented, "Yes, I am a racist."

Well, I thought that was quite ironic. The whole day I thought that this guy was Mexican.

I assert, "Hmm, I thought you were Mexican."

He questioned, "Does that bother you?"

"No, I'm around ignorant people all the time," I asserted. I think that guy wanted to beat my ass. Oh, well. I don't know why I am still shocked by this language and behavior. It's like I live in my utopian classroom. The students in my classroom are all different ethnicities. They treat one another with respect. They know better. At ten they are not ignorant and prejudiced. These are learned states of being. It kills me. Sometimes I think it's the "Inland Empire." Perhaps, this drug-infested, bored fucking community breeds this kind of mentality. It makes me want to get out of town, move to LA, and teach in the barrio. Oh, well. I suppose this conservative area needs a bur up its ass like myself. Whatever.

All or Nothing HC goes on our month-long majority US tour in September. I am so excited and ready. My teacher's salary is buying me a Chevrolet Express. The Astro Van is on its last leg. I'm selling it to Matt (ex-Shelter, now in the Irks). May it bring him much happiness. My entire band has changed lineup, except for yours truly. It's for the best. People have to be able to tour. I spent five years in He's Dead Jim and the furthest we got was Berkeley. All or Nothing HC will tour as much as possible. After Dan, bass, attempted suicide and quit, we got Jared. Matt (Irks) has been filling in for Ryan (see last column). Josh from the Blue Bloods replaced Chris, who didn't have transportation or a phone and just decided not to show up to the shows or practice anymore. Finally, Mariana, from Killing Zoe and Black Helicopters, replaced our drummer Woody, who refused to tour anymore. I remember interviewing AFI in 1994

and asking if they had any advice for other bands. Their advice was, "don't break up, no matter what, keep going." I take that advice to heart. Fuck it. I love writing, singing, performing and touring. I will do this as long as I am physically able to do so. We finally have an aonhc page on ontherag.net. Check it out for our tour dates, etc. Listen to the Mp3s and write on our message board.

DJ Tina Bold (kucr.org) and Annie (Stem Cell Research and *Digress* magazine) put on an awesome benefit for the Step Up Recovery House (www.stepuprecovery.com) started by Foxy's Lisa at the Coffee Depot in Riverside. LP (Lisa) was in the band Fourgasm during the 90s. Her partners in Step-Up Recovery are Debi and Danny (Danny is in the band Boobie Trap). The assistant director of Step-Up Recovery is Gabby of The Cadillac Tramps, Manic Hispanic, The Flock of Goo Goo, and Drive-By Smile. Gabby is a Certified Addiction Specialist. The benefit was a cabaret. It was so much fun and hugely successful. Jared and I performed "At Last" by Etta James and "Hound Dog," the Big Mamma Thornton version. The Bellrays' Lisa and Bob performed an awe-inspiring acoustic set as well as the BBQ Kings, who played their rocknroll two-piece best. Others did dances, comedic routines, poetry, and more. It was a treat.

I've been retired from the dungeon for almost a year now. I miss beating people. I'm thinking of starting Kung Fu San Soo again. Every year since 1994 I have started Kung Foo and then dropped out because of a busy schedule. I want to get my black belt before I die. I'd like to know that I could kill a man with my bare hands. I think it would be a good outlet for me—keep me from going back to the dungeon.

As always you can reach me at webmistress@ontherag.net. PO Box 251 Norco, CA 92860-0251/ www.ontherag.net <http://www.ontherag.net/> . I have to complete my SoCal scene report, no band stuff this time. I am still working on the compilation. I am not shocked that it is taking me so long. The last compilation seemed to take forever too.

Observations of Orlando Vacation 2003.

I haven't had one of those delvés into the darkness of humanity for a while, so me and my girlfriend Margo and a couple of others decided to go to Florida in blistering heat and walk around for 12 hours a day, pay $35 to throw up rancid chicken salad, and wear SPF 70 suntan lotion while my friend Tina got large red welts, saying "Oh I wanted to get some color the first day." It's so absurd how much crap then can cram into a city. All I gotta say is, at least it's in Florida. It's in nobody's way and chances are, you're not gonna get stuck there for lack of a better place to go, like Las Vegas. I dunno, though; for the sheer people-watching experience, nothing beats it, not even opening night at a new Kung Fu flick in the Bronx. Anyhow here's some reflections on my past week.

Fat

I have gone into the fat people at Disney World thing before, so all of you who got pissed the last few times please calm down. It was much better this time. I don't think Americans have lost any weight or gained any brains in the eight years since I was there last. There were just not as many Americans there. It was Brazilian week, and there were hundreds of in-shape Brazilian youth groups walking around, and they even made special announcements in Portuguese. This was sort of a good breath of air in between the stupid midwesternredneck pollution. Also, most of the scary rides now have a seat at the beginning of the line so you can make sure your fat ass will not fit. This was very reassuring. The best roller coaster experience was at Sea World, who got bought by Anheuser-Busch and started adding crazy rides with a sea theme instead of the usual boring animal shows. The good thing was that people who go to Sea World expect to feed some stingrays and get splashed by a whale and were too fat or chicken to go on this crazy loopy rollercoaster, so we went on till Margo was fully over her childhood coaster fears, and my friend Mike was crapping his shorts. On that note, the whole week, I saw long ass lines for these 10 pound turkey legs. So, the last day I waited for 20 minutes in the sun thinking, well if all these losers are waiting this long in this heat for this thing, it must be great. I took one bite and threw it out. I have no idea what sort of insane process is involved to make a huge turkey leg taste like a hot dog, but to tell you the truth I really don't wanna know. After the first day, we realized throwing a bunch of apples and oranges in my backpack was a better idea than trying to eat and wait in line for the park food. Sea World also now has an attraction called Beer School, where they give you a brief explanation into how beer is made and then give you a bunch of samples. This seemed to attract more whales than Shamu Stadium.

Lazy

Various amusement parks rent out motorized wheelchairs. While I may have seen one or two palsy people and a broken leg, I saw about 100 people who were just too fat or lazy to walk around. My favorite was a drunken old couple. The guy was like 50 but had drank and smoked and sunned himself to a premature 80. He had a washcloth over his shoulder that he coughed blood clots into between slugs of beer. The woman had a greasy frizzy blonde perm, and buzzed her chair up to the top of the Tower of Terror so she could scream at the guy who wasn't letting her son/grandson in for a legitimate reason (lost his ticket, cut the line etc.) The shift changed in the middle of her rant and I watched her follow the poor part-time retiree ticket checker all the way down the tower and then come back up to scream at his teenaged replacement. We saw the two chairs and the moron kid a few times that day as the motorized contingent got drunker and drunker. A weird South American family with a guy in a wheelchair kept stopping and holding up the line, after a while we realized he was trying to stay out of the parts of the line that the sun was hitting. This did not stop people behind us from screaming. Disney employees are usually forced to be cheery and lively at all times in fear of their measly jobs. The one time I saw someone break character was in this theater where Drew Carey makes sounds in headphones while they turn off all the lights and someone runs off with yer credit cards. I guess a few wheelchair people ducked under the rope and got in the theater know realizing they only have 3 or 4 pairs of headphones set aside for wheelchair people. The woman running the show seriously lost her shit while forgetting she had a Madonna mic on, she started cursing all the wheelchair people while everyone listened. Then a baby started crying the whole time the lights went out and after hearing a loud smack, a bunch of Disney employees with flashlights came running. My favorite wheelchair moment was when it started that late afternoon Floridian downpour and two people got up out of their wheels and ran for cover.

Stupid

We ducked into some little old fashioned-looking ice cream parlor to cool off. I was looking at the antique things on the wall—there was a Juicyfruit gum dispenser from 1930-something, when a pack of gum cost a penny. I exclaimed, "I wonder how many morons put a penny in there and then complained about not getting any gum. About 40 seconds later the kid from the table next to us, said, "Hey Dad, can I have a penny?" He then walked over to our table and started fighting with the machine, while I had my head down laughing hysterically. It's always a better laugh when you're trying not to. I think at Disney World if you start trouble they whisk you away through some secret hidden passageway and kick you the hell out. A friend of mine smoked a doobie passed to her by an 11-year-old on a church bus tour. Some strange surveillance alarm went off and two Disney Security guards appeared out of nowhere and

escorted them through some strange tunnel system. They told her to never come back, but since she was there with her parents and they didn't know she was in trouble, she just went right back in. Anyhow, in the newer Disney parks I guess this tunnel system is not completed yet. Some woman started a fistfight at the Muppet Show, and paramedics were called and we watched the guards walk the offenders out of the park quietly. We tried to follow and overhear what was being said but it started pouring on us again, of course.

Anyhow, some people think a vacation is all about sitting on your ass on some boring beach or getting with nature, etc., etc. I disagree with this sort of experience. If I sat on a beach all week, I'd gain ten pounds and worry about whatever crap I would have to deal with when I got back home. Nature gives you a rash. I'll take seeing some chick beat the hell out of her bratty kids over any nature hike. There's nothing that makes you feel better about yourself then a Cracker Barrel breakfast and people to laugh at all day.

Anyhow please share your theme park experiences with me, maybe I can do a zine article about it or something, especially if you've worked at one. bill@candids.com Later!

I've got far too much to cover this month to offer you any glimpse into my personality or any information about my life. That stuff is better left unsaid anyway. I've cut the past two columns short, so I've got some making up to do (meaning we've got a very looooooooong one this time). Your monthly installment of the vinyl dork bible begins now!

The only way to begin is with a big bang. THE FUSE! was introduced to me (nearly two years ago!!!) by a friend from LA. He played me their CD-R demo, *The Sound Of Youth Frustration*, and I was 100% knocked out by it (copied that fucker right then and there, as a matter of fact). All my tab-keeping yielded little in scoring more recorded output, with the exception of a couple of compilation appearances that only made my appetite stronger. Luckily, I was able to catch them live a few times, which was a worthy (not to mention *wild*) substitute to an actual release. Not anymore. I'm downright fucking elated to announce that the wax has finally arrived! In The Red (who else?) has released the band's debut 45, "Breaker! Breaker!" b/w "Beggars And Choosers." As expected, this makes most of the stuff out there look like an exercise in futility. It sounds like a mish-mash of all the most out-there aspects of punk (with a hefty amount of post-punk), mod and soul, delivered with an urgency and confidence rarely found on a band's debut release. I've heard the whole "CRASS meets THE WHO" comparison as well, and that's actually not a bad description of the sound. A less frightening comparison (maybe more, I dunno) might be a synthless LE SHOK transformed into three suit-wearing Latinos that like to break equipment, JAM records and minds. With an album coming on In The Red and a live release out soon on Broadway Jungle, it looks like I'll have more to go nuts over. Nothing should stand in your way of checking this band out! Absolute highest recommendation!

In other In The Red news, THE MYSTERY GIRLS have just released a teaser single for their upcoming LP. "Circles In The Sand" b/w "That's What I Said" features beefed-up production in comparison to their past recordings. Fear not, the enthusiasm and sheer brilliance of their tunes has not gone anywhere. I've yet to be anything other than totally floored by this band, and I'm not alone. If you are one of those people who ignore my (seemingly) constant praise of da' MGs, do yourself a favor and plunk down $3 for this fucker. Then you can write me a nice e-mail, thanking me for steering you toward the path of righteousness. You too, KIM FOWLEY.

THE LOST SOUNDS are quite a busy bunch this month, having just completed a West Coast tour (I'm still recovering from the brilliant Oakland outing) and a whole slew of new releases. First up, there's the must-buy split 7"EP they did with THE VANISHING on Cochon Records. They rule, as always. I'd elaborate, but I've got a mountain of side-projects to get through. ALICJA TROUT has belted out some new singles by a couple of her other bands: THE FITTS' *II* 7"EP (Big Neck Records) and MOUSE-ROCKET's *Missing Teeth* 7"EP (Wrecked'Em Wreckords). Mouse-Rocket also has a CD-R album (50 copies only!) entitled *Water Recordings* available for consumption. On top of all this, she's assembled what appears to be a solo/demos CD-R entitled *Snow Flakes*, which features rough demos for Lost Sounds and ULTRACATS tunes, not to mention a slew of other material. It appears that she hasn't slept in months. Not to be outdone, JAY REATARD treated some lucky folks to the just-completed FINAL SOLUTIONS record by making a bundle of limited CD-Rs, all with cover art and extra "weird shit" tacked on. I'd have one of these, but *someone* who'll remain nameless was quicker on the draw. On top of all this it appears that Jay and Alicja find themselves together in *another* fucking band called NERVOUS PATTERNS, whose CD-R album is chock full of moody synth numbers that fluctuate between fairly poppy tunes to sheer ferociousness. I'm probably one of ten people on the planet who has interest in everything mentioned above, but for the sake of completion (and obsession), I've included it all for you. Any and all interested parties should contact Contaminated Records for further info. I'm spent...

At The Lost Sounds show, I bumped into one of my very favorite punkers, RYAN WONG. Hopefully, you recognize his name from THE WONGS, REATARDS, DESTRUCTION UNIT, THE PEEPS and occasionally, The Lost Sounds. Anyway, his new band, DIGITAL LEATHER, ended up playing that night, which was an added bonus to say the least. If you're at all familiar with any of Ryan's other bands, I'm sure you'll be shocked to know that Digital Leather is more controlled than previous combos. It should also be mentioned that they still fucking rocked! Luckily, I snatched up a copy of their *S/T* LP (on amazing 50/50 black and pink vinyl!), which was co-released by two Arizona labels, King Of Monsters and I Don't Feel A Thing. The album features some pretty heavy synth and drum-machine punk, almost tip-toeing into the "indie" realm at times. Regardless, it's bound to please any SCREAMERS devotee or fans of ragged synth drone. Apparently, this is the band's second album, the first being a D.I.Y. CD-only deal, not unlike the Lost Sounds ones mentioned above. For those who ache for Wong-induced injury, Empty Records will be releasing a Destruction Unit album sometime before the year is out. That record is gonna rip everybody's fucking head off, mark my words! If you have the single, you know what I'm talking about.

THE LITTLE KILLERS' album is out! Crypt's jump back into the NOW is a success in my book, as this *S/T* LP is chock full of great garage punk (heavy on the punk). Reminiscent of bands like THE LAZY COWGIRLS and THE DEVIL DOGS, Brooklyn's Little Killers throw in a pinch of 70s punk and 50s rock to spice things up. It's pretty much exactly what I would expect from Crypt, one of my all-time favorite labels. Reputed to be hot shit live, this LP has my mouth watering for a West Coast jaunt. I can already feel myself drinking!

Keeping up with the whole "bands I can't stop talking about...ever" thread, the mighty A-FRAMES have a new single! France's great Royal label is releasing the *Membrane* 7"EP. If you are one of the folks who favored the rougher sound of their early singles, look no further for your fix. As always, incredible stuff from this Seattle lot.

I'm sure that more than a few of you out there are DETROIT COBRAS fans. Is it even *possible* to dislike them? Anyway, you'll definitely recognize the name of original Cobras guru STEVE SHAW on the debut LP by his new combo, THE FONDAS! *Coming Now!* finds Shaw again covering some of the finest obscure R&B/soul classics, this time with a new female vocalist (JULIE BENJAMIN) and yet another excellent band (featuring one member of the late, great DIRTYS). Needless to say, if you dug the Cobras, you'll be all over this. I'm sure they'll be drunken arguments over which vocalist is better: the tough and dirty angel known as RACHEL NAGY or the sweet yet dangerous Ms. Benjamin. I ask you, honestly: is there really any way you can lose? I'd give up a finger to go on a date with either one 'em! You've got my e-mail address, ladies.

Any label that focuses on releasing good singles is a label worthy of my and your attention, admiration and scratch. I think that's why I dig Portland's Johnny Cat Records so much: all they do is release great punk singles! This month, we've got three new ones to salivate over. First up is the debut slab from CLOROX GIRLS, the *Baby* 7"EP. Four barebones garage punk tunes, all of which are top-notch. Next up is THE FIRST TIME, whose *You Can't Hurt Me* 7"EP features some prime 70s punk with wall-to-wall guitar buzz. Finally, we have a split single that teams up two of the Northwest's finest bands, THE FLIP-TOPS and THE GLORYHOLES! You'd be wise to snatch up these limited puppies soon, or you'll be reading the *MRR* reviews section with a long face. Grab those TRIGGERS singles too, if you haven't already.

Does it even really need to be said that Japanese bands are "my thing"? Well, I've found another: THE SPROUTS! Their *Pins And Glasses* 7"EP, released on Sound Pollution (yeah, just buy it asshole!) is an absolute motherfucker. It's thrash, it's punk, it's garage, and it's fucking great! Fans of JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS *and* REGISTRATORS: do not delay! A 20 song 7"EP!!!

I've always been a big fan of Flying Bomb Records. They seem to have gone through a quiet spell after the horrible shit they had to endure in the production of their Christmas comp CD, but they've resurfaced with an absolute top-notch release: the debut album by MHz, *Harness The Power* (CD-only). I flipped over the 7"EP they released a couple years back, but I must say I wasn't prepared for this at all. Imagine if The A-Frames were weaned on BLACK FLAG or something of similar aggression. Young, fast, and scientific!

BLACK ICE is a new Bay Area combo featuring a few members of THE PHANTOM LIMBS. Their first vinyl offering, the *Eve* 10"EP, was recently released on Atakra. It shares the creepiness and darkness of The Limbs, but follows more along the lines of bands like THE VANISHING or SUBTONIX. Perhaps it's the female vox? Fans of any of those bands won't be disappointed.

Hopefully, you've been keeping up with Die Slaughterhaus Records, a fine Atlanta label run by some BLACK LIPS members. This month, we see the label release another fine single by another Atlanta band, THE CARBONAS. Hopefully you caught their fine *Scene Killer* LP from a little over a year ago. I enjoyed that disc, but the *I'm Astray* 7"EP is far superior in every way. It's got everything going for it: rougher production, a sharp guitar sound and huge piles of snot. It should also be mentioned that the "geek factor" with this one is pretty high, with the silk-screened sleeves and ultra-limited (100 copies) white wax.

Italy's ATOMSMASHERS have just released their debut LP on Rip Off Records! If there was ever a band that had the formula for what's generally thought of as "that Rip Off sound" down, it's these guys. Borrowing the simplicity of LOLI AND THE CHONES and the speedy attack of THE ZODIAC KILLERS, *Drop The Bomb* is a stupid, fast punk rock record...rude, pure and simple. The hardcore Rip Off fans seem divided over this LP, with some loving it and some *really fucking hating it*. I don't really see what the big deal is. Go find out yourself! It beats the shit out of that TAXI album, that's for sure!

A band that would sound right at home on Rip Off is SF's very own RADIO REELERS. It took 'em long enough to follow up their *Radio Feelin'* 7"EP, but Radio Beat Records has just released their debut album, *Rockin' Sound*! 11 speedy, beer-soaked tunes on this puppy. If you were a fan of TRUST FUND BABIES, THE SHRINKS or THE SHIFTERS, you'll be all over this one.

DIRTBOMBS fans, listen up! Mick and Co. appear LIVE on a new CD compilation put out by some microbrewery in Detroit, Motor City Brewing Works. Apparently, they have a habit of getting tanked there. Anyway, the *Ghettoblaster, Vol. 2* CD features a whole slew of Detroit bands caught live at the brewery. Notables include THE HENTCHMEN, KO & THE KNOCKOUTS, BANTAM ROOSTER, and many more.

The deranged bastard known as MR. CALIFORNIA AND THE STATE POLICE has reared his twisted head again, this time on a split 7" with IL's one-weirdo-band, INVERTED. This is a strange item: apparently split self-released in an edition of 100 copies! Cali's side is an entire "live set", recorded on Boston's WMBR. That's right: 11 songs, 93 seconds. The Inverted guy is a little more, uh, detailed in his delivery, as his one-man BL'AST cover will show. Mr. Cali is my pick, if only for his hit "Free Jazz" (because it really is better than paying for it). Load Records with be releasing Mr. California's 51-song 10", *Audio Hallucinations*, by the time this hits stands. We're all fucking doomed!!!

I had seen THIS MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY's name floating around recently. C'mon, it's pretty easy to recognize. After hearing glowing reports of their live shows, I tracked down their debut CDEP, *The Cleveland Finger*, recently released on Exit Stencil Recordings. Their brand of driving, upbeat post-punk is all over the place, yet they still manage to retain some order and soul amidst the bashing. TMIBH is an all-star band of sorts, as members of CHARGERS STREET GANG, BASSHOLES and NEON KING KONG (the NKK members must be the old TEENAGE KNOCKOUTS guys) make up the players. Might be worth a look if you're nutty...

On/On Switch's latest conquest is a Seattle band by the name of POPULAR SHAPES. You should already know this band from their excellent split 7"EP with THE INTELLIGENCE from late last year. The label has two releases planned for this incredibly spastic combo. The first is a remarkably dorky and fantastic hand-lathed 7", *Flattered, You're Terrified*, which is limited to a mere 50 copies! Talk about some exclusionary, elitist horseshit. Count me in! Naturally, a full album is soon to follow. Preliminary reports suggest that the album, *Bikini Styles*, is both "popular" and "shapely." We shall see soon enough.

As a Bay Area resident, if there's a regional compilation that deals with some of the shit I see night in and night out, I'm gonna do some heavy investigating. *Frisco Styles*, a monster 2xCD SF compilation that covers the city's broad sound, unfortunately misses more than it hits. There are a few good bands on here: ONION FLAVORED RINGS, SHOTWELL, ERASE ERATTA, THE COACHWHIPS and a couple other notables, but mostly this comp just makes want to move.

Did any of you hear THE DISKORDS interview on *MRR* Radio? Name another 13 year old that's gonna run rampant through the *MRR* library and emerge with a LA PESTE record...Jesus! The phrase "too cool for school" has never meant more. All reports point to their debut LP (soon to be released on Vinyl Warning) to be a killer. If their interview and live show offers any insight, I'd say there's little doubt! Thanks for blowing through town guys! Have fun doing algebra!

Back again, my semi-monthly hardcore blurb! One thing I can tell is that if I talk about a hardcore record in this column, you can be damn sure it's got that whole mainstream,

"crossover" appeal. You know, so all of us "garage rockers" can still get into it. Oh yeah, and it has to be *really* fucking metal too. Anyway, I held off mentioning TRAGATELO for months, mainly because I was pissed about not being able to find a copy. Luckily, I've snatched one up and can tell you that it absolutely fucking rules...no surprise there. It's easily my favorite hardcore LP since, well, LIMP WRIST. Hopefully, it's not too late to grab one of these, but prepare to look around a while. Havoc Records' latest singles, EPs from PATH OF DESTRUCTION and DAMAGE DEPOSIT (my fave of the two) should be readily available. I'm sure one look at the Top Ten Lists will tell you that the TRAGEDY/TOTALITÄR split 7"EP is pretty fucking good. Gee, that's a shocker...

Our march back through time won't take nearly as long as the new stuff. I'm gonna start with THE BAGS, because anything else would just be totally fucking wrong. As alluded to in previous columns, Artifix Records had been working on the first official Bags release since 1978! I pleased to report that the *Disco's Dead* 7"EP is out! The title cut, a previously unreleased studio demo from 1979, is enough to make this an essential purchase. Holy fuck, is this tune good! The flip features two live tracks, "Why Tomorrow?" (Hong Kong Café, '79) and "Sanyo Theme" (Masque, '78). Although the live recording quality is ho-hum, I'm not complaining one bit about having three more Bags tunes in my collection. You won't either.

I don't know if I was lucky, or it's been repressed or whatever, but I've seen several copies of Hot Box's *Rather See You Dead* compilation 7"EP floating around. Released in 1996, this single captures some exclusive tunes by some of Texas' most famed late 70s bands: REALLY RED, THE HATES and LEGIONAIRE'S DISEASE! If you recognize any of these bands, you already know how fucking good this single is. If you see this around, don't think twice...buy the fucker!

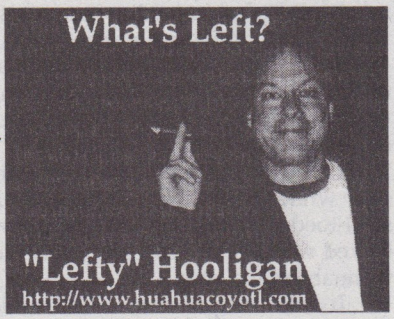
Time for a UK round up. Last Year's Youth couldn't wait to dish out an LP reissue for THE NOW. Too bad I already dropped a few pennies on the singles and have yet to pick up the LP. I say go with their recent CARPETTES reissue, a safer bet. There's two STIFF LITTLE FINGERS LP boots floating around out there. Of course, one of them is *Inflammable Material*. Nice try. *Wasted Life*, on the other hand, features a slew of b-sides, live tracks and Peel Sessions. Choose wisely! Staying with UK punk, I also picked up a decent boot-alike reissue of the second single by REVENGE. "We're Not Gonna Take It" b/w "Pornography" is loud, rude and rare enough to peak the interest of broke scum the world over.

Empty Records just released *Codex 1980*, a full-length collection of Seattle's most famed early hardcore/punk act, SOLGER. The release includes the band's single, live tunes and unreleased material. Problem is that if you want the vinyl, you gotta go through Empty direct, as only 100 copies were pressed! Fuck, they'll probably be gone by the time you read this. Sorry! The CD will be everywhere, but c'mon...you know what you want, right?

Lastly, I'm incredibly fucking excited about Sympathy's reissue of *Rock'N'Roll Holiday*, a live album by one of the finest bands of the 90s, the fucking OBLIVIANS! Originally a self-released "bootleg", this legit reissue has filled a gaping void in my "O" section (keep quiet, sicko). Now if someone would only repress the *17 Cum Shots* album, which is not only a superior live recording, but also my favorite Oblivians record. AND I DON'T OWN A COPY, GODDAMNIT!!! I want one more than life itself...somebody sell me one.

In closing and in tribute, I'd like to offer my most sincere apologies go to the families and friends of the EXPLODING HEARTS. They were good people (based on my brief interactions with them) and a good band. Kid Killer remains, to this day, the only person who I didn't personally know to tell me that he enjoyed this column on a regular basis, which is something that I'm incredibly proud of and thankful for. In fact, he was the only person who answered my plea for info regarding THE BEDPANS from several columns back (turns out Kid was in The Bedpans and financed the pressing of the single himself!) What else can be said? It's just fucking tragic. On top of all this, we see THE MISTREATERS lose all their gear when their van caught fire on tour and ZERO TOLERANCE TASK FORCE getting into another fatal crash, losing two members themselves. Talk about a shitty fucking summer. Take care of yourselves!!! Hopefully we'll all have some good news next month...

Mitch Cardwell <letsgethurt@yahoo.com>



It's a common enough experience.

You run into a familiar name, a name from your past, the name of an old friend, enemy or lover. The context might be a hundred and eighty degrees different from that past, as when I came across the name of an old anarchist comrade turned bitter enemy. Noted for his long hair, ultra-left politics and intense drug use over twenty years before at UCSD, he became the mayor of a small coastal town north of San Diego noted for wearing loud Hawaiian shirts with three-piece business suits. Or the context might differ little in spirit from the past, as when I learned that freelance writer and journalist Billie Nessen had been arrested by the Indonesian government for attempting to report on that military's brutal war against insurgents in Aceh from the rebels point-of-view. Billy had already embarrassed the Indonesian government with award winning reporting about East Timor, so they charged him with visa violations, sentenced him to time served and kicked him out of the country. I knew Billy from his Rebel Baker days in San Diego.

Such experiences often trigger bouts of reflection, speculation or analysis on my part. This was the case when I picked up a copy of Freedom Road #3, a publication of the post-Maoist Freedom Road Socialist Organization, at Oakland's excellent Walden Pond Bookstore a couple of weekends ago. There, in a special section dedicated to critiquing Max Elbaum's first-hand history of the New Communist Movement *Revolution in the Air: Sixties Radicals Turn to Lenin, Mao and Che* is an article authored by Chris Day called "The Fire Last Time."

That's the same Chris Day who, a decade ago, was one of the honcho's behind that revolutionary anarchist newspaper/network/federation Love and Rage.

Folks familiar with this column know Chris and I are not exactly chums. I was highly critical of the now deceased Love and Rage, but I've personally liked many of the people involved in the organization. Chris impressed me as slime pretty early on.

Even before Love and Rage in fact. In the spring of 1989 I was living in San Diego, publishing an anarcho-punk zine called *San Diego's Daily Impulse* and participating in a pretty lively if short-lived regional network of anarchist and anti-authoritarian individuals and groups called the Borderlands Anti-Authoritarian Community. A number of us were getting ready for the big Continental Anarchist Gathering, scheduled for San Francisco in August, when Chris and a red skin named Kieren dropped in to promote an idea making the rounds of anarchist circles in those days for a continental revolutionary anarchist newspaper.

As it happened, a tiny Trotskyist sect called the Revolutionary Socialist League—noted mainly for publishing (with their own printing press) a quasi-party paper called The Torch—came to the conclusion that Leninism in all its varieties was irredeemably flawed. At least a majority of the RSL's membership did, as well as the conclusion that they were actually anarchists. So they offered their press to the embryonic anar-

chist movement of the day, inspiring the idea for the above mentioned continental revolutionary anarchist newspaper.

Chris and Kieren made their first sales pitch at a BAAC meeting called for the occasion. Kieren was cool, clearly working class and very self possessed. I later learned he was also a red diaper baby. He talked about his experiences in the Twin Cities scene going steel-toed doc to steel-toed doc with fascist skins to drive them physically out of town. We argued over whether this wasn't just one gang taking on another over turf, in this case an anarchopunk gang taking on a Nazi skinhead one for control of the Twin Cities scene. Chris talked all together too much, and what he said got us locals a bit upset. Essentially, he wanted us to fold our local anarchist work, to include the *Daily Impulse*, into the continental anarchist newspaper project. Now for someone to call himself an anarchist and not grasp that local work was the very heart and soul of anarchism struck me as more than odd.

I remember them unpacking at the house they were staying over while in San Diego. I watched as Chris fondled a pair of steel-toed docs and gushed about how much skinhead ass he'd kicked with them. I saw the romantic gleam of a revolutionary wannabe in his eyes.

It didn't surprise me to find out later that Chris was middle class. True middle class, as in the son of a doctor or a lawyer, some professional. Chris was slick and glib, but he was also playing at being a bad ass revolutionary.

BAAC kept an open mind on the continental newspaper idea, despite my misgivings. That dimmed a little with the San Francisco Continental Anarchist Gathering, when some of the maneuvering of Chris Day and Co was on display as to who and what was or was not "revolutionary enough" to be a part of their project. Still, Chris proved the consummate politician, and the fallout didn't come until the formative stages of Love and Rage when promises were broken, folks were lied to and my BAAC comrades decided to steer clear of the whole mess. I mean everybody suspected Love and Rage because of the RSL ex-Trot involvement. It didn't help to have manipulative politicos like Chris associated with the project.

I wrote a humorous little pamphlet, "Do You Have Vanguard Envy?," as my critique of L&R in general and Chris Day in particular. In trying to be "more revolutionary than thou" the organization aped some of the worst features of the Leninist Left. The newspaper was virtually indistinguishable in layout, and sometimes even in content from Leftist party papers. They glommed onto the Autonomen black bloc tactic as if to one-up their main competition for "revolutionary youth," that being the RCP's Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade. The "leadership" could run roughshod over the membership, as happened at the 1993 "Conference of the Long Knives" when L&R became a federation. And of course, L&R split with enough acrimony and deceit to warm the heart of old Trotsky himself. Surprisingly, the ex-RSL types had very little to do with this vanguard envy. As Chris Day's post-split organization Fire By Night Organizing Committee wrote in their pamphlet "After Winter Must Come Spring," half the former RSL members left within a year and many of the rest became inactive. Of those who stayed active in Love and Rage, virtually all remained anarchists after the split.

Nope, it was folks like Chris Day who gave L&R its vanguard envy. Chris came to anarchism wanting it to replicate the dubious successes of Leninism by insisting that his anarchism was revolutionary, organized and fixated upon race. Indeed, Fire By Night judged the theory and practice of anarchism insufficient because L&R had not adequately come to terms with racism and white skin privilege or revolutionary discipline and organization. This is how ex-L&Rer Wayne Price puts it in "Nine Years of the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation:"

Chris Day, a founder and influential member (that is, a "leader") had concluded that it was time to abandon anarchism. He told people informally that we had reached the limits of the anarchist "milieu" and it was time to move on. He wrote a paper on The Historical Failure of Anarchism, emphasizing the programmatic weaknesses of anarchism. He declared that no revolution could succeed without a centralized, regular army and a revolutionary state. A group formed around him, particularly of people who had never had to choose between anarchism and authoritarian Marxism. Although they suddenly discovered the value of the international working class, their new-found Marxism was not of any of the libertarian or humanistic varieties (autonomes, council communism, CLR James, Eric Fromm, Hal Draper, etc.). It was Maoism—one of the most Stalinist, authoritarian versions. [...] *There is a myth in the present anarchist movement that L&R collapsed due to weakness over African-American liberation. This was never a major dispute inside the organization, although perhaps it should have been. It was raised at the last minute, the main supporter of Race Traitor politics blocing with the Maoist faction. But it was never the issue in the faction fight, that being anarchism versus Maoism.*

Fire By Night's fawning admiration of the EZLN in particular and enthusiastic approval of "mass line" politics in general made their merger with the post-Maoist Freedom Road Socialist Organization an unsurprising dénouement to Love and Rage's checkered history.

Now hold on, you say. Wasn't I, at the very time Chris was visiting San Diego, claiming to be an anarcho-marxist and drifting toward left communism in part because anarchism did not adequately come to terms with issues of power, revolutionary organization and class? Yes, but I actually read Marx. I'd expect Chris to settle for the vulgar Maoist/post-Maoist milieu because it's overarching themes are pretty much what he hoped to instill in anarchism. And let's face it; Maoism is to Marxism what disco is to music, a travesty at best. I'll demonstrate how Maoism plays fast and loose with Marx, and even Lenin, in a moment. First, let's take a look at how sloppy and vague Chris's thinking remains, even as a post-Maoist, with a quote from "The Fire Last Time."

"Thousands of young people, largely from middle-class backgrounds, immersed themselves in the life of the working class by taking jobs in factories and moving into working class communities. They dedicated themselves to organizing for revolution, often sacrificing their own health and well being and risking beatings and arrests in order to build serious organizations of oppressed people, organizations that could really fight. More than any other trend coming out of the '60's, the New Communist Movement sought to build and sometimes succeeded in building genuinely multi-racial organizations."

Aside from salivating over Maoist successes, can you smell the patronizing air to this? Of course, this is actually Chris's own path through life, a young middle-class person who sees himself as joining the oppressed to fight for revolution. It was also his analysis of punk youth when he was with Love and Rage. Not to make too fine a point of it, but Chris wouldn't know class analysis if it bit him on his post-vanguardist ass. All it takes is a little basic Marxism to prove this analysis fundamentally flawed.

Ah, finally, the point of this column, a definition of working class. It has to do with our relationship to the means of production. Do we own and control the means of production, or do we work for those who do? Workers don't own factories, businesses or farms. We own only our own labor, which we sell for a wage to those who do own these things in order to survive.

While this constitutes the basic Marxist definition of the working class, nothing is quite so simple, particularly when it comes to Karl Marx. Marx's general concept of the proletariat, based as it is upon ownership of productive means and wage labor, took on a particular character thanks to Marx's own emphasis upon the industrial proletariat as the vanguard of the working class. Industrial capitalism was the leading edge of economic development in the 19th century, and Marx fully expected the industrial sector of the working class to continue to expand until it made up not only a majority of society but virtually the entire proletariat as well. In addition, the industrial discipline and organization required of the industrial working

class by the capitalist class as part of the proletariat's exploitation could be transformed into the revolutionary organization and discipline needed by the working class to overthrow their exploiters, take power and usher in socialism.

Lenin, of course, converted this into dogma with the caveat that the vanguard in turn needs a vanguard. That's why Leninist vanguard parties (and pre-party formations) in the United States continue to require their cadre to take jobs in factories and move into working class communities, this despite the fact that the industrial proletariat is a miniscule and continually shrinking part of the overall working class in this country. This fetishism of the industrial proletariat by Lenin and his heirs comes with the implication that, if you're not industrial working class you're not working class at all. Even though Marx held onto his revolutionary expectations for the industrial proletariat until his death, he was by no means so rigid in his class analysis. He first regarded the emerging stratum of white-collar workers as actually a part of the *petit bourgeoisie*, the true middle class. Toward the end of Marx's life, upon seeing both the expansion and proletarianization of this white-collar sector, he included them more and more often in the working class proper.

If the working class is defined in broad Marxist terms, we're talking about 60 to 70% of the population. If the working class is defined in narrow Leninist terms, we're talking about merely 15% (and declining) of the working class. This makes quite a difference in terms of organizing strategy, let alone the power and potential of the class as a class. It also reveals one basic fallacy in Chris Day's sorry excuse for a class analysis. Yes, the sons and daughters of America's professional middle class, even of its *bourgeois* elite, sought to immerse themselves in the working class in the 1960's (through the NCM, etc.), and to a lesser extent in the 1990's (through L&R, etc.). Just as often, the children of the white-collar working class wound up taking factory jobs and moving into blue-collar working class communities to organize for revolution.

This tendency to see anybody who doesn't work in a factory as middle class or higher in part stems from the complexities of defining the working class in an American context. On the one hand the capitalist class has eroded the basic integrity of the hourly wage as a standard in the definition of the working class. More and more folks are salaried, not because they're management, but because the owning class doesn't want to pay for overtime and other benefits. I'm on salary as an IT worker because my company wants to be able to call me for computer emergencies after hours and on weekends, without having to pay for it. The work remains wage labor, no matter how you cut it. On the other hand, working class folks are able to own their own homes and even invest in the stock market. It's not uncommon for workers to have a little business going on the side or to rent out a converted garage to make ends meet. They remain working class however because they could never make it without their day—e.g. wage labor—jobs. That's what pays the bills.

Couple this with wage disparities ranging from the few dollars a day earned by sweatshop workers to the $100,000 annual income of the highest paid Longshoremen, infuse everything with the American myths of "upward mobility" and the "middle class," and you have the main elements of a *bourgeois* obfuscation in which even hamburger flippers at McDonalds think of themselves as "middle class." Needless to say, this is intended to obscure a worker's sense of self-interest and to thwart any development of what Marx called class consciousness.

The issue of "false consciousness" is a matter for another column. To continue with the ramifications of defining the working class, a number of factors go into defining someone as working class, first and foremost being their immediate status as a wage slave. Secondary factors can include whether someone comes from a working class background, aspires to rise above their class, or stands politically with the working class. The wild card factor is whether someone is working class and also class conscious. I say wild card because whereas Marx considered class consciousness simultaneously as the subjective made objective in the class struggle and as an essential element in the working class's self-emancipation as a class, it has suffered horrible distortions at the hands of Mao.

Mao led a "proletarian revolution" in a country that was 99% plus peasantry. In order to do so, he detached Marx's concept of working class consciousness from its material roots, called it "proletarian consciousness," and bestowed it upon anyone who accepted his peculiar formulation of Leninism. A peasant, a doctor, a lawyer, even a capitalist all could possess proletarian consciousness so long as they adhered to "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse Tung Thought." To have the correct political analysis was tantamount to being working class in Mao's bizarre twist on Leninist vanguardism, leaving Maoists to argue endlessly over the correct party line with a sectarianism that has rivaled Trostskyism. Even the Freedom Road Socialist Organization, known for its principled efforts to unify and incorporate the scattering of Maoist and post-Maoist sects outside the "Mao More Than Ever" Revolutionary Communist Party, suffered a split in its ranks, with the Fight Back faction also calling itself Freedom Road Socialist Organization.

It can be argued that, by making consciousness paramount in defining one's class, Maoism makes the false "middle class" consciousness of much of the American working class a reality simply because working people believe it, which dovetails nicely with the *bourgeois* obfuscation I mentioned above. Another column maybe, because I'm so over my word limit at this point I'm in danger of the MRR Central Committee's ruthless axe. I am grateful that Chris Day finally came out after almost 15 years in the Stalinist closet and no longer claims to be anti-authoritarian slash libertarian. And pleased my initial hunch about Chris as he got a revolutionary hard-on stroking his steel-toed docs finally proved on target.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.

Raise your red flag, go ahead I dare ya. You won't get hardcore in the clubs of Bulgaria. —Mykel Board, 1980

I'm wrong. —Mykel Board 2003

In order to really get organized, you must discard. Start with a desk drawer. Dump it out in the middle of the floor. Pick out what you need and put it back in the drawer. Then throw the rest away. —Moishe Pippik, in "How to Organize Your Life," 1988

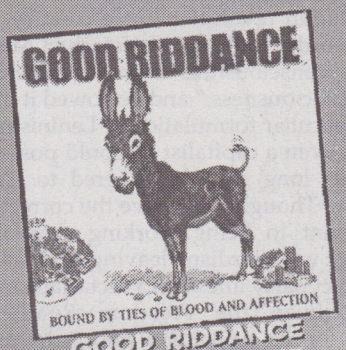
You're right. —Mykel Board 2003

I start to write this column in pen, in Bourgas. I write as if you know this industrial city on the Black Sea, in Bulgaria. I've got an hour to kill before my train leaves for Stara Zagora. So I figure I should get started.

I expected this trip to divide itself neatly. The first half, a journey through nostalgiaville: sitting around the cracker barrel with old friends, talking about old times, chewing the cud, doing what old people do when they haven't seen each other in more years than you've been alive.

Crossing the Serbian border from Hungary should have brought me to the second, the adventure half of the trip. New people, new places, strange languages, customs, food. Things I

NOW THIS WON'T HURT A BIT!



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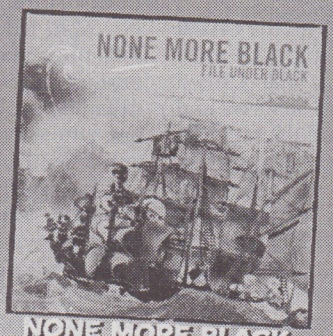

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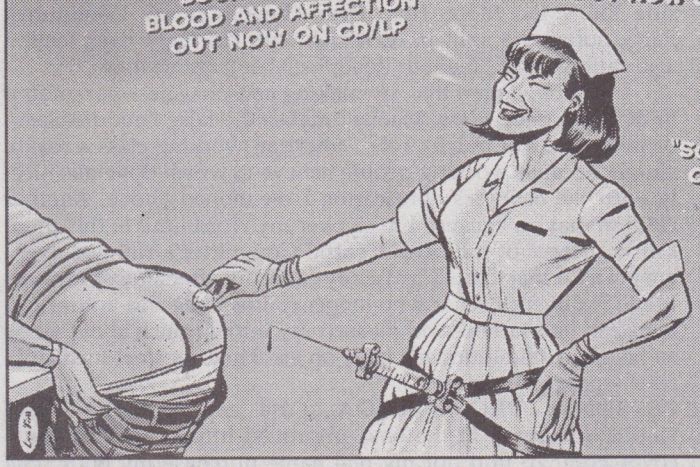

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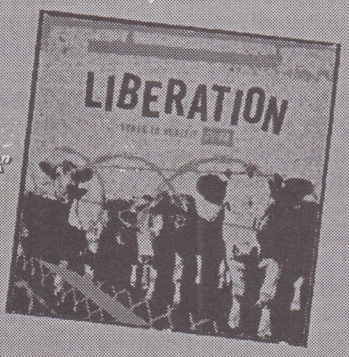

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OCT 3RD PORTLAND, OR @ SOLID STATE
OCT 4TH TACOMA, WA @ HELLS KITCHEN
OCT 5TH SPOKANE, WA @ B-SIDES
OCT 7TH SALT LAKE CITY, UT @ TBA
OCT 8TH FT. COLLINS, CO @ STARLIGHT
OCT 9TH DENVER, CO @ LION'S LIAR
OCT 10TH OMAHA,NE @ RANCH BOWL
OCT 11TH DES MOINES, IA @ HAIRY MARY'S
OCT 12TH MILWAUKEE, WI @ V'NUKS
OCT 13TH MINNEAPOLIS, MN @ TRIPLE ROCK SOCIAL
OCT 14TH KANSAS CITY, MO @ EL TORREAN
OCT 15TH ST. LOUIS, MO @ TBA
OCT 16TH FARMINGTON, MO @ THE ROCK HOUSE
OCT 17TH DETROIT, MI @ TBA
OCT 18TH CLEVELAND, OH @ TBA
OCT 19TH CHICAGO, IL @ THE BOTTOM LOUNGE
OCT 21ST ALBANY, NY @ VALENTINES
OCT 22ND ITHACA, NY @ CATAWAYS
OCT 23RD PASSAIC, NJ @ CONNECTIONS
OCT 24TH ALLENTOWN, PA @ GENODA SOCIAL CLUB
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OCT 26TH BOSTON, MA @ AXIS
OCT 27TH PHILADELPHIA, PA @ NORTHSTAR
OCT 28TH NYC, NY @ CB-GB'S
OCT 29TH BALTIMORE, MD @ THE SIDEBAR
OCT 30TH TBA
OCT 31ST TBA
NOV 1ST TAMPA, FL @ THE BRASS MUG
NOV 2ND FT. LAUDERDALE, FL @ THE FACTORY
NOV 3RD ATLANTA, GA @ TBA
NOV 4TH PENSACOLA, FL @ TBA
NOV 5TH MOBILE, AL @ TBA
NOV 6TH HOUSTON, TX @ FITZGERALDS
NOV 7TH AUSTIN, TX @ EMO'S
NOV 8TH SAN ANTONIO, TX @ SAMS BURGER JOINT
NOV 9TH CORPUS CHRISTI, TX @ SOUNDS
NOV 10TH DALLAS, TX @ TBA
NOV 11TH OK CITY, OK @ THE GREEN DOOR
NOV 12TH ALBQ., NM @ LAUNCH PAD
NOV 13TH PHOENIX, AZ @ MASON JAR
NOV 14TH TUCSON, AZ @ THE BLACK CAT
NOV 15TH CORONA, CA @ THE SHOWCASE
NOV 16TH LOS ANGELES, CA @ TBA
NOV 17TH LAS VEGAS, NV @ HUNTRIDGE THEATRE
NOV 18TH SAN DIEGO, CA @ SKATEBOARD HEAVEN
NOV 19TH SANTA CRUZ, CA @ MEDITERRANEAN
NOV 20TH SAN FRAN, CA @ THE POUND

SUBTERRANEAN
MAIL ORDER

THEE FLYING DUTCHMEN
"Caveman Sessions" LP

Great googa moogah! This is one sicko masterpiece of no-fi bottlewash and insane carburetor cleaner! Sounds like it was recorded in the bathroom down the hall, but what the fuck! Organ-drenched and raw, raw, raw! Drool-o-phonic caveman garage! Liner notes by J.P. Gutrock hisself! Power to the pimples!!

LP $8.15

SHAM 69 "That's Life" LP

One of the absolute classics of early streetpunk, this 1978 release was the band's 2nd LP, and the first ever punk concept album (or as guitarist Dave Parsons described it, "It's the story of a day in the life of the sort of people that we were and the sort of people we knew"). Songs include "Hurry Up Harry" and "Angels with Dirty Faces." This is one of those records that every punk needs to have in one form or another! Gatefold sleeve with lots of extra photos and liner notes, 180 gram vinyl, PVC audiophile dustsleeve, Italian import.

LP $14.55

"SENZA TREGUA" comp. LP

The cream of the crop of 1983 Tuscan Italian hardcore, this has 20 rare tracks from CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS, PUTRID FEVER, I REFUSE IT!, STATO DI POLIZIA, WARDOGS, TRAUMATIC, and JUGGERNAUT. Originally released in late 1983 or early 1984 on the legendary Bad Compilation Tapes label, this quality reissue features great vintage 1988 cover art by Winston Smith (part of which is reproduced on a full color board insert), plus an 8-page booklet of photos, graphics, lyrics and liner notes. Limited pressing of 1000.

LP $12.20

THE FITTS "II" 7"

A '77-style garage punk duo led by Alicja Trout of LOST SOUNDS blasts out 4 raging, loud, lo-fi, twisted and demented rants. Bile, bile and more bile. Jay Reatard produces.

7" $4.35

THE BAGS "Disco's Dead" 7"

Three previously unreleased tracks (one studio and 2 live) by this grievously underappreciated early Los Angeles punk band, recorded in 1978 and 1979. Consisting of charismatic singer Alice Bag, ubiquitous guitarist/songwriter Craig Lee (CATHOLIC DAMAGE, etc.), bassist Pat Bag (now Patricia Morrison of THE DAMNED), and ace drummer Terry Bag, they rocked the West Coast to raving audiences until their breakup at the end of 1979. Includes an interview with Alice and Pat conducted in March 2003.

7" $5.05

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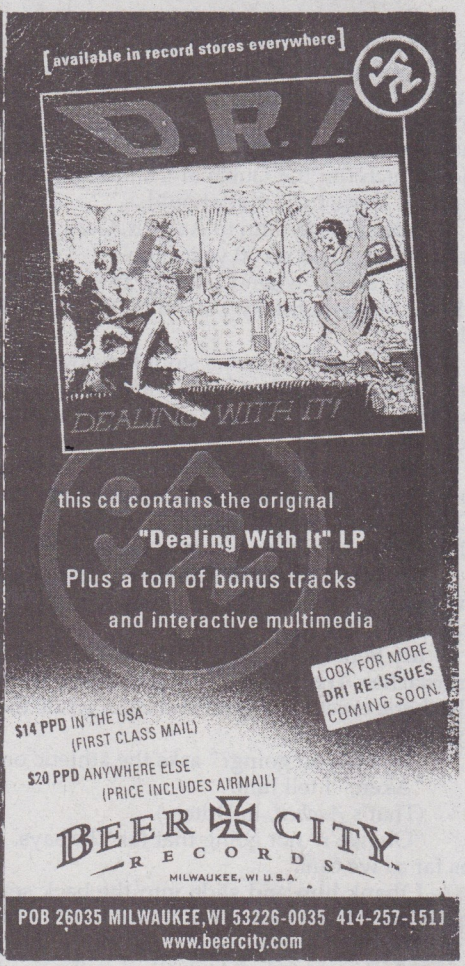

don't understand. That's not how it worked out.

Rewind: First stop: Amsterdam, hangin' with my BGK pals and Karin, the cripple goddess. I stay with Wouter, former punk rocker, now college professor. He's still radical, committed, but not so musical anymore. The visit's a good one. It reminds me how much fun the Dutch are, although they take up a lot more vertical space than they should.

From Amsterdam to Aachen, Germany. I'll visit people at a table I last dined on 30 years ago.

It's raining when I take the trolley to the last stop, the one closest to the highway. I stand by the entrance and stick out my thumb.

Ahh, here's someone stopping now. I grab my bag and run up to the car. It pulls away. An arm extends out the window. The middle finger of the hand on the arm is raised in a parting gesture.

An hour passes. Rain gathers in my hat rim. Now it drips over the front in a steady dribble, just to the right of my nose. Drivers won't stop in the rain. Sympathy shmympathy. They don't want to get the inside of their cars wet.

Ah here's one now. Finally! A plain Opel, subtly red, with two people in the front seat. I grab my pack and hobble up to the car.

My benefactors both have dark slicked-back hair and thick mustaches. They both wear black suits. They're like twin Mario Brothers, except one is fat and bald, while the other is athletically square-shaped.

"Where you going?" asks the athletic one. He's the driver.

"Aken," I tell him.

(That's *Aachen*, in Dutch.)

"Oh, we're not going that far," he says. "But we'll take you as far as we can."

I thank him and slide into the back seat of their perfectly clean car. My boots leave a brown imprint on the carpet.

The fat bald guy hides his eyes as the driver swerves around a large truck, first driving on the two left wheels, then on the two right wheels.

These guys look as Dutch as I do. I figure they're Italian, taking advantage of the EEC to work in Holland. But I'm diplomatic.

"You from around here?" I ask.

"We're Moroccan," says the driver, suddenly picking up speed, "but we've been living in Holland for over ten years. Where are you from?"

This is wartime. They're Arabs. If I tell them I'm an American, I might see videos of my freshly severed head on the internet.

"I'm from New York." I say.

"New York!" says the driver, smiling. "You're the first American we've ever had in this car!"

The fat man turns around and shakes my hand. Then the driver does, forgetting that he needs to steer the vehicle.

The car swerves into the highway shoulder. Casually, he turns and pulls it back in lane. The fat guy covers his eyes again. I swear I hear him say "Oy!"

We talk a bit about life in Holland and life in Morocco. As we talk, the car vrooms in and out of traffic. The fat guy shakes his head.

"Are you a Christian?" asks the driver.

Uh oh, here it comes. Well, Dale can have my porno collection. My records get split between *MRR* and Jeff Bale.

"Uh, I'm a Jew," I say, just as he's passing a truck.

"Wow!" says the driver. "You're the first Jew we've ever had in this car!"

He turns around to shake my hand again. The fat guy grabs the wheel and just manages to avoid scraping the side of the semi.

"Here," says the fat guy, offering me a bag of potato chips. "Why don't you have some of these? They're kosher."

"I don't keep kosher," I tell him.

"You're a Jew and you don't keep kosher?" he asks. "What would your mother say? You eat pork?"

"Well," I ask him in return, "you're Moslem. Do you drink?"

"OK, OK," he says, "I drink. But I don't eat pork."

The talk continues as I munch on the potato chips. They tell me they're both working for some Dutch company. In the I.T. section. They miss the weather and peace and quiet of Morocco, but Holland is where the money is.

"What do *you* do?" asks the driver.

"I teach English to Japanese businessmen," I tell him.

"A teacher!" he says. "You're the first teacher we've ever had in this car!"

He swivels to shake my hand, sending the car skidding two lanes to the right. We don't die.

They drive me far out of their way, convincing me to take a train from a near border town to Aachen. Then, they drive me to the train station, and negotiate my ticket.

"Good-bye," says the driver leaving me to wait for the train.

"Salaam," I say.

In Germany it's nostalgia heaven. My old pals have grown older, balder, fatter, stricken with kids and other social ills, I don't care. We're friends, just being together again. There's Helmut and Birgit and Marita and Walter. Later in Duesseldorf, it's Ernie and Achim and Ralf. In Hungary: Imre, Tomas, and Ildi.

I can drift along forever on the la-de-da cloud of remembering until I check my e-mail at Imre's place in Budapest.

Hey Faggot! is the subject line.

I recognize the return address. It's Ziggy, an old fling from Canada. We had our fun, screwed a lot, even made videos. I wrote a column about her wild orgies with manly women and a Polish bouncer who enjoys breaking people's fingers.

We had some disagreements. Our *relationship* (God, I hate that word!) was never clear. I struggled to keep us friends, but there was always something bad happening. After me, she moved on to my pal down South. No matter. I don't really care what someone does, I want to keep being friends.

We've had no contact for more than a year. Still, she hasn't changed, I think. Always had a knack for an eye-catching subject line, I think.

I open the message. Pow! I'm so shaken by it that I delete it immediately. I have to paraphrase here:

Mykel, I can't tell you how much I hate you for telling me that Southern guy "likes babies." You know what I mean, you faggot. I'm going down there to get you. I want that video and any copies. I'm going to tear your place apart. I'm bringing The Pole, he'll take care of you.

Then, I'm going to look up your mother. I'll tell her everything. It'll destroy her. I've got proof. Interviews you did....

It goes on into even more threatening incoherence.

Me saying someone else "likes babies?" That'd be the pot calling the kettle African American. It's just not true. A lie. Interviews? My mother? What the fuck?

That e-mail shakes me up. It's not that it's just looneybird ravings. It's the situation. Here I am, building my love-quilt with old friends, and KERPOW! An old friend becomes a new enemy. At least someone who I worked at keeping as an old friend. What gives?

Oh well, everyone is entitled to a bad day. And what's one angry looneybird among hundreds of old pals? Right? Wrong!

From Hungary, the plan is to take a train to Belgrade in Serbia. Then, change for the express to Sofia. Punk rockers I met on the internet will meet me at the train station.

In Belgrade, I ask for the train to Sofia. The guard says something like "Nie Mah" which in Polish means "we don't have any." I figure it means the same in Serbian. I figure right. Maybe there's a bus.

"Gdie Autobussi na Sofia?" I ask in broken Polish, hoping that'll get through to the Serbian train guard. He is not friendly.

"Da-nish." he says.

"No, American," I say, with more than a bit of apprehension.

"Da-NISH!" he says again. "Da-NISH autobussi na Sofia."

"Gdie da-nish?" I ask.

He points to the train behind him. I get on it, hoping my ticket to Sofia will get me to Da-nish, a place I never heard of.

The train's crowded. I slide through and take one of two free seats in a quiet compartment.

I sit next to a woman about my age. She's traveling with her pregnant daughter. The baby-oven's ass is on one seat and her head lies on Mom's lap in the next seat. She dozes in fits, opening and closing her eyes. Besides those two, the compartment contains a very fat man who sleeps the whole way. His hamhock thighs block the door. By the window sits a frail old man, clutching a large black leather bag.

The train takes off. The woman and the old man talk a bit. I pull out a book and start reading. In a few minutes, the train stops.

"Da-Nish? Da-Nish?" I ask.

The woman shakes her head and says something which I guess is the name of the town. The train takes off again and soon stops.

"Da-Nish? Da-Nish?" I ask.

The woman shakes her head again and smiles.

I have a pocket-sized *East European Phrasebook.* I pull it out and look for some way to ask when we get to Da-Nish.

"Kah-dah Da-Nish?" I ask.

She writes a time down on my ticket. It's a half-hour away. Using the book, we begin a discussion. She's from Belgrade, she tells me. I tell her I'm from New York.

Suddenly, her hands fly into the air. Her arms move in a large arc, like someone describing fireworks.

"We hiding... Bombs... from American... falling," she's using every English word she knows. "Boom. Boom. Boom. We scare. American bombs... we hide." With every *boom* she repeats the wide arm gesture. Her face contorts with fear. Not of me, but of the memory in her head.

She is telling me her story. There's no recrimination in her voice. She isn't blaming me. She probably hates Clinton the way the Iraqis hate Bush. But she doesn't hate me.

Using my phrase book, we talk about the war, life, professions, pregnant kids. She tells me not to worry because the old man is going to the same town I am. I should just follow him. I get her address and promise to send her a New Year's card. Yes! Another addition to my 500+ mailing list. I might even show up on her front porch someday.

I have a friend in New York who discards people. She's not interested in keeping friends through thick and thin. If someone hurts her, POW! they're off the list. Only the tried and true last any length of time. She doesn't struggle to keep those who fuck her over.

I'm not like that. Every acquaintance, every past fuck, every hand shook, every stranger in a train. No matter what (with three exceptions), I try to keep people. I struggle with changes of addresses, internet searches. Each person is precious to me for moments like these. Belt me? Fuck me over? Stop fucking me? Say bad things about my mother? Fuhgeddabouddit! Forget anything they might have done in the past. At least the bad stuff.

Thirty years later? What's thirty years among friends? We've made friendships. They'll stay friendships unless we break them. But why should we break them? While the connections remain, we're never alone.

Back on the train, the old man signals me that we've reached the town. I shake hands all around and follow him off the train. We are in the town of NIC, pronounced NISH. The "da" part, I later learn, means *"to."*

The man shows me the way into the train station then bids me farewell. I go to the info booth and ask for the bus to Sofia.

"Nie mah," is the answer.

"Huh?" I ask in my best Serbian. "I came here from Belgrade because this is where you get the bus to Sofia."

"Nie bussi," says the man.

There is however, a train. It leaves in five hours.

OK. I wait.

This is a scary place. Military men with machine guns sit in small groups in the large station. It reminds me of Grand Central in NY, without the crowds.

In fact, it's mostly empty. Cavernous. The footsteps of people lurking in corners ring like church bells. I do not belong here. They know it. I can tell by the way they look over their shoulders at me, and then whisper.

After five minutes, one of the soldiers comes up to me.

"Pasosh!" he demands.

It's a few seconds before I realize he wants my passport. I pull it out. He looks at. Holds it up to the light. Tilts it back and forth, looking at the picture. Then he hands it back to me with a grunt.

After an hour, he is gone, replaced by a clone in identical military fatigues with an identical machine gun. It doesn't take long for the replacement to walk up to me and demand. PASOSH!

I go outside and sit in the sun by the tracks.

Others wait there. They've learned not to sit in the station, despite the heat. The soldiers are too annoying. It isn't worth it.

Among the people sitting on a bench near the tracks is a senior citizen with a white cane. He's not wearing dark glasses, so it takes me awhile to realize that he's blind. He speaks to the woman next to him, gesturing with the stump of a right hand.

Remembering the mother in the train and her bomb stories, I begin to wonder if *we* did that. If *our* bombs crippled and blinded this guy.

After two hours of wondering, the train comes. I get on. Six hours later, I'm in Sofia. Bulgaria at last.

When I get here, I call Shutta, singer for the powerful Bulgarian hardcore band *Vendetta.* In a flash, he's at the train station. Shaved head, scruffy goatee, he's wiry thin, wearing shorts that reveal tattoos up the back of each leg. He's with a bunch of pals. There's Sasha, a walking smiley-face. Slightly shorter than Shutta, what's left of his hair is cut short—close to his head. Sesi is the third member of this visiting party. About my height, he's the quiet one, speaking only occasionally. During the cab ride to the Commune, I can see he's worried about his English. Shutta is worried about his label, Years of Pain, his band, Vendetta, and the state of the world. Sasha is worried about a new car his girlfriend bought—it hasn't quite been delivered.

Me? Fuck worry. I'm on an adventure. One that will take me to the Spiro Sharpe Sofia Commune. One that will introduce me to my *adash,* half a world away. One that will let me meet THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD. One that will make me new friends and get me taken in a tourist trap. One that will have me getting falling-down drunk with a bunch of high school kids... and their teacher. One that will have me swimming in the Black Sea. You'll read all about that next month.

But right now I've got to fast-forward. I need to sum up with the point of this column. So, using the magic of the printed word: POW! We're four days later.

I'm at the local internet cafe with Shutta, in the process of deleting spam. If I had one millimeter for every offer to increase my penis length, I'd be dragging it from here to Paramus.

Ah, here's an email from another former buck fuddy. A girl who dumped me for an Oriental. I was pissed at being unceremoniously cut off. I even refused *one-last-fuck-for-old- times.* But soon after, I got the urge to start up again. At least be friends. We haven't done the deed in over a year, but at least we can stay pals, right? Yeah, right.

Having learned from my quick delete last time, I keep this message so I can reproduce it exactly:

Mykel, you are a really bad lover: you show very little interest in what's unique and lovely. The message goes on to explain how awful I was in bed because I didn't worship her body. I quote some more:

My teeny waist and flat flat stomach. My astoundingly round

wide tits so far apart and so close to my ribs that they are like a man's pecs, my eyes so huge and blue and fucking intelligent, my soft as a child's hair, my pussy so deep and juicy you'd think you found the original fruit of EDEN, my ribs you can count them, my ears like a BUDDHA so large and funny, my lips so sad so sad so sad, my shoulders so wide for a girl so small, my ass so much like a black girl's for roundness and muscularity, my thighs which could squeeze a horse to death.

How could I not give this body all it deserved? She asks... out of nowhere, a year later.

What is this? Another nut coming back to haunt me, like a jalapeño pepper passed through my system and burning on the way out. I shudda cut the strings, moved on. When it's over, it's over. Why can't I learn that? I shudda done what my NY pal does. Dumped while the dumping was good. If you get shafted, don't wait around for the other end!

Here I sit, next to a guy I've known for less than a week. A guy who walks halfway through town to fetch me from the train station, a guy who earns less in a month than I do in a week... yet who won't let me pay for my own beer. Now I have Moroccan Dutchmen, a Serbian housewife, and a houseful of Bulgarian punk rockers. Why do I need those monsters from the past? I have better friends today. And there is *only* today.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

--> *I fucked up dept:* The more perceptive of you may have noticed that I repeated a column recently, and the last two were out of order. It was my fault. I assumed I sent in part 1 of the chakra column. I didn't. It was an old column about Catholic boy fucking.

Later, I emailed part 2 of the chakra column, before part 1 was printed. Then, to make things complete, I emailed part 1 *after* part 2. Get it? Sorry about that. Let's hope this one works. It *is* part 1 of THE BULGARIAN SAGA... I think.

--> *Guess how I'm gonna use this dept:* There's a great shareware program called MAILWASHER. It bounces email from anyone you tell it to. They just can't get through. It's like your address doesn't exist for them. Check it out at www.mailwasher.com

--> *Worse than Iraq dept:* Just when you thought all the possible tragedies have been tragedized... NIKE BUYS CONVERSE! Don't you just want to cry? What's left? Keds?

My only hope is that Nike will lose a bundle on this. They're trying to hide the purchase. No swoosh on the shoes. Nothing with the Nike name. But we know.

Don't they realize that people buy Converse because they *hate* Nike? If you have an ounce of gonad, you'll stop buying Converse now that they *are* Nike. Well, I can hope, can't I?

--> *Coming out dept:* Actually, it's out. The new (?) ARTLESS CD. It's got most of our vinyl numbers, plus a couple of ditties never before released. Order it from CD Baby at: www.cdbaby.com/artless

While you're there you can even download a couple mp3s to spice up your Kazaa file.

--> *Making contacts dept:* You can and should contact the guys in Bulgaria. You can reach Shutta and Vendetta at: yearsofpain@mail.bg I'm sure he'd love to trade CDs, send you stuff for review, talk about punk rock, *anything*. I'll give you more addresses next week. This is a good place to start.

A couple weeks ago, I got my copy of *Mama Sez No War* zine in the mail. Normally, I don't sit down and devour a hot-off-the-press read. It usually takes a few days of it sitting on my "gotta read" pile before I can afford myself a couple hours of reading time. But this time, as soon as my girl went to bed, I spent two straight hours reading that zine cover to cover and it was the best two hours of reading I'd spent in quite a while.

What I really appreciated was the collective voice around an anti-war ideal. It was thick with photos and essays about having marched with your kids in New York City (and other cities) to protest the Iraq war, teaching kids about activism, recognizing the benefits and advantages of organizing smaller demos in your own town, and empathizing with moms in warzones. After reading it straight through, I was excited and hopeful, as if I had stumbled upon a mama revolution. (If you want to get your eyes on it, see the end of this column for the info.) I couldn't wait for us all to pack up and move to one central location and recruit more to join us in raising our kids actively, collectively, progressively—the whole she-bang!

Fast forward through those couple of weeks ago to now.

I just attended the graduation of two kick-ass women friends who I know from being involved in our usually wacky but always beloved punk-activist community. When I was pregnant, they were both just starting midwifery school and therefore became an important part of my support system and have continued to be so all the way to now. I've felt lucky and privileged to know that when or if I've needed any instant and trusted information, I've had access to their progressive and well studied knowledge.

In addition to being thankful, I'm just so impressed to see my friends actively dedicated to taking their activist hopes and dreams past the sometimes hopeless rhetoric of radical revolution and into a real, tangible practice of reclaiming something that was stolen from the people by a powerful institution. Why? Because so many political movements theorize about change that would take lifetimes to achieve and without any direct influence on daily life here and now while working for that change.

The one and only Ina May Gaskina, a radical pioneer of reclaiming midwifery as a practice in the United States, spoke at their graduation. Around 1990, I became friends with two sisters who were born at The Farm, the community where Ina May began practicing midwifery. At some point during our friendship, they shared their birth stories—enlightening me about the fact that hospital births with OBs calling the shots has not always been, and shouldn't be, the norm. Their stories of being born safely in a VW bus made me curious. It's because of the work that Ina May Gaskin started doing in the late1960s that I even knew I wanted to seek the care of a midwife during my pregnancy in 1999.

Hearing Ina May speak really reaffirmed my enthusiasm for building community, reaching out to build coalition with other communities, ultimately building a movement, because she has tirelessly done just that. In 1970, she co-founded The Farm community. She is also the founder and director of The Farm Midwifery Center. To date, the center has handled more than 2,200 births, 96 percent of without medical asistance. Over the past three decades, Ina May has lectured, been published, and taught around the world, received numerous prestigiuos awards, co-founded the Midwives Alliance of North America and represents the organization at various coalition meetings, initiated projects in order to bring public awareness to the problem of avoidable maternal mortality. She is one of the creators of the consensus document of the Coalition to Improve Maternity Services.

Enter my two friends again—the two newest midwives on our block. They're ready to midwife all over our city's blocks and well beyond. Maybe that's when you know a movement is a movement—when things start out with a pioneer, they kick ass "in their own backyard" and make progress, spilling their accomplishments out into other communities, eventually organizing, educating, and inspiring enough people with whom to build coalitions and organizations that they ultimately bring real change, and thereby attract new, commited people who start their work and involvement at the grassroots level. What a

lovely cycle. What started as a radical practice to reclaim midwifery has come full circle and continues to grow. Midwifery as a common practice is coming back, through the generations, and continues to break down the walls that were constructed by the establishment to keep it out.

Here is what one of those two friends, Alana Kibbe, has to say about joining the midwifery movement:

"My own mother was an activist during my childhood. She sent us to the co-op preschool and set up her own parent-run cooperative summer camp with all the other parents, mostly moms, in the neighborhood. Half of our yard was a garden and the other half a forest of tree swings. She taught us, above and beyond all else, to be healthy and to be free. My first activist work was in tenth grade, escorting at the local abortion clinic. I was "the runner" who escorted women from the bus stop onto the clinic property, my mother at my side out on those sidewalks every Saturday.

"Come age twenty-one, I worked as a counselor, educator, and assistant at a clinic in the town I chose to make my home. I worked part-time and took herbalism classes in all the rest of my time. I chose to focus my activism on women's health care because it had become so clear that it necessitated such focus. In so many other communities and groups and projects I had worked on, everything always seemed reactionary or like a quick fix to a problem that wasn't just going to disappear. Not that such work doesn't have an invaluable place, because it sure as hell does, but I couldn't do it anymore. I couldn't go out and yell to know (or at least from what it seemed to me) that the next day the sun would rise again and the general population would still be living apathetic and stagnant. I needed to see the changes happening actively, I needed to see the fruits of my, our labors. And then I discovered midwifery.

"I had been struggling for a while, with feeling awesome that I had found a focus for my activism that created real, palpable change at the moment it occurred, and feeling like I wasn't doing enough. Midwifery school was the only logical next step—the history of the practice, and current work of it in much of North America having been and remaining revolutionary in itself. At first I thought I would midwife the punk and activist women and families in my self-claimed community. Then I realized, as I began and went through midwifery school and study, that I would midwife women and their families in general.

"There has been a struggle here for me though; it has been a challenge to integrate my radical political ideas into my practice of midwifery. Licensed and regulated direct-entry midwifery (non-nurse midwifery) has come so far from the underground illegal practice to the professionalization of the practice. It seems somewhat contradictory, because when Ina May Gaskin began, practicing midwifery was a very radical practice itself, and now it has come such a long way, gaining more mainstream acceptance every day. It is a movement gaining momentum and affecting real, tangible change. It has come such a long way that it's not inherently radical anymore. Bringing the radicalism back into the practice of midwifery for me has meant many a night concocting how to subversively communicate my activist ideals to the general population of women and families in their childbearing year.

"Why? Because I can't just walk into a childbirth education class and introduce ideas to expecting parents using revolutionary language. These are everyday folk. Try encouraging a working class, single parent who is struggling to make ends meet that they should just trust a theorized ideal and be revolutionary. What are they going to really, tangibly be able to attach to enough in order to do it? So instead of saying, "You can empower yourself by trusting and knowing your body," I say, "Here is a textbook point of view about how your healthy body works during pregnancy. Here are some ways that you can work with it and understand it so it can continue working properly and so that it will perform as it should. For example, remove fear from your mind and your labor will not be impeded." I use language that encourages revolutionary activity in the everyday lives of these women and families.

"In general, the prenatal, birthing preparation, and postpartum education in which I engage the women and their families I work with has a few basic focuses that do just this, subversively introduce to them to revolutionary ideas—ideas of freedom of life, body, and thought, and ideas that potentially challenge them and their surroundings to bring change in their lives.

"For example, pregnancy exists in midwifery as prenatal care and is one of the most transformational and potentially revolutionary times in any woman's life. Therefore, teaching women about physical and emotional health and healing and assisting them with knowledge-filled, violence-free labor and birth processes helps make that transformation happen. It is as if I am sowing the seeds, through birth education, for the anarchist ideals of freedom and people having power over their own lives. A woman who has had a natural birth becomes empowered and is transformed by now knowing first-hand what birth is supposed to be and what she is capable of. She has felt a real, tangible change in herself. She feels a higher level of internal power and therefore, the potential for freedom. And no theory by itself could have done that.

"Firstly, I teach that the primary needs of their coming and growing children can be met primarily by themselves. Their baby will find food, comfort, and entertainment to the point of a fulfilling exhaustion from their parents' bodies, arms, and actions far exceeding anything external, including all those things everyone wants them to have that they don't really know what to do with, or thinks they need because someone down the line convinced them they won't be a "good parent" if they don't have or buy them. Because we live in a success-oriented culture, this is one of the biggest points I try to teach—that the parents of these new lives do not need things like a separate bed, specially manufactured baby food in little jars, disposable diapers, or a nursery full of matching decor and toys in order to be sucessful parents. What they do need is themselves, some inexpensive clothes, a handful of cloth diapers, and a blanket. I like for these new parents to learn what they really need from what their new baby necessitates.

"Secondly, babies in womb and after birth need their parents to be healthy in order for them to be able to parent fully. In other words, if they do not or do not learn how to meet their own basic needs, they will have an increased and more exhausting work load cut out for them in parenting. Because just like in the way modern medicine is practiced, quick fixes don't work with raising children in the long run either. Raising kids, just like building a revolutionary movement, does not have room for temporary solutions. They need long term solutions and health. I encourage parenting with honesty and understanding instead of parenting with preconceived notions.

"And thirdly, I teach women to let go of their expectations. This letting go applies to their pregnancies, labor, and birth, the postpartum time when they are meeting their baby face to face for the first time, and all the way though their children's teenage years. All of these instances undoubtedly carry moments, whether short or long-lived, of the unexpected, and therefore many expectations cannot be fulfilled. For example, labor and birth always include the unexpected, whether in the form of a change or unexpected emotion or a physical complication. So if a woman can let go of expectations, that's very freeing.

I truly believe if women and families can learn to be more free in their preparation for birth, they create for themselves the potential for learning to be more free in parenting and in life in general. And maybe even free enough to create their own revolution, or help their children create theirs."

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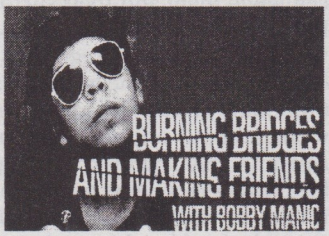
To order a copy of *Mama Sez No War* zine, send $1.06 in stamps or well-concealed cash (preferably stamps) to:
Vikki / PO Box 20388 / Tompkins Square Station / New York,

NY 10009
Contact Vikki at cradlecap00@yahoo.com
Portions of *Mama Sez No War* can also be seen at: anarconyc.net/mamazine.html



I've been going back and forth all month debating whether or not I should even bother to cover other bands this month. I was going to dedicate my entire column as a memorial to my late friends, the Exploding Hearts. For those of you who have been living under a rock (or missed my previous columns) the Hearts were an incredible power pop combo that won me over a long time ago. In my opinion they are one of the most important bands in my collection. Their music captured everything I have ever loved about pop and punk. The harmonies and charm of bubble gum and girl groups, and the snotty, juvenile delinquency of the RAMONES and BOYS. The band really struck a chord with me in a way that so very few bands have ever done. After several attempts to play the Bay Area they finally made it. They got a headlining spot at the Bottom of the Hill and blew everyone's minds. They stuck around the next night to play three songs at the Parkside. Unfortunately they decided to drive back home after the show. Their van crashed right outside of Eugene, OR. Adam, Matt and Jeremy all died. It's taken me quite a while to get over the initial shock and now that I've let it sink in, it's still a horrible feeling that I will never hear another record from them, or hear Adam crack jokes and talk records. I'm bummed the band is gone, but I'm devastated I lost someone I called friend. A long time ago I promised Adam I'd have this printed. It's stupid and we came up with it while we were drunk, so bear with me...

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25 REASONS THE EXPLODING HEARTS ARE BETTER THAN YOUR BAND

1) They put out.
2) They have been known to throw their change to bums.
4) They sold their souls to Ike Turner in exchange for guitar lessons.
5) They collectively nailed almost all of the Suicide Girls.
7) "I didn't learn to play guitar so I can kiss ass."
8) The lead singer strategically wears white creepers and stands in foreground, of photos in hunched poses so people won't realize he is a midget.
9) They really are that good in the sack.
10) They date strippers for the tips.
11) Terry looks like Stiv Bators's bastard son.
12) "Yeah, Terry and I live together... no we aren't lovers, asshole!"
13) "Dude, I gotta go, I promised Terry I'd give him a hair cut."
14) Was your debut single as good as theirs? Didn't think so.
15) Any night of the week they can be found lying in gutter with members of the Portland's inner circle of rock and rollers.
16) Roxy Epoxy grabbed Adam's soldier.
17) On the back of their CD they have a photo of aforementioned action.
18) King Louie was in their band.
19) They spent the better part of their existence looking for a replacement drummer, only to have original drummer decide he wanted to stay in the band.
20) Why hate them? They think you're nice.
21) They are proof that not only women and the lead singer of Green Day have nose rings.
22) They singer might not be able to see over the counter at Wendy's and always requires a booster seat when they eat out, but boy, howdy, he can write a classic pop song.
23) If "Making Teenage Faces" isn't the best fucking song ever written, then someone must have struck an even sweeter deal with the devil than they did.
24) They actually have the balls to look as goofy as bands did in the late 70s and early 80s (seriously, have you seen these guys??? Trapped in '79 is all I gotta say).
25) They acknowledge and accept the fact that they are sissies, playing sissy music, but they still get laid way more than either you or me.

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My heart drags heavy still, but as they say life goes on. So here are a few records you should probably check out.

First up is the GIRLS. The night of the Hearts' accident they jumped on a packed show at the Parkside. That night I could have sworn the guy that walked past me wearing pink Chucks was the dude from the Briefs. Oh, how right I was. Turns out Steve was filling in on bass for their West Coast tour. The boys, err... Girls, delivered a fantastic set of spastic new wavey punk rock ala the Briefs (but with way more DEVO in the vocals). Their debut six song CD, *Return to Zero*, has not left my stereo since. Amazing. www.thegirlsseattle.com

Sacramento's kings o' the squared circle, the KNOCKOFFS, celebrated their tenth anniversary last weekend with fellow Sacramento-ites the MALLRATS, HELPER MONKEYS, the GROOVIE GHOULIES and 7 SECONDS at the Boardwalk in Orangeville (quite possibly the worst venue in the world, run by the largest conglomeration of jank-heads I have ever known). The show was a ton of fun and really showed me how tightly knit the 916 rock and roll scene is. The band also had a few copies of their self released CD-R I *See London, I See France: The Knockoffs Live in Europe* (the irony being that 1. the Knockoffs have never been to Europe [or out of the state], and 2. it's not live) packed with covers of their favorite bands (GENERATION X, SHAM 69, the DEAD BOYS and the Ghoulies, to name but a few) and an entire demo version of their second album *Sell the Move*. This is essential for any Knockoffs fan, but for those of you who are new to the band, I recommend finding their first two albums first (maybe if you're really nice I help you with that) check out www.theknocoffs.com in the meantime.

I have become obsessed with the POWER PEARLS series. I'm not sure if this is a good thing or not (it's not very healthy for my wallet, I know that for sure). You all know the deal, bootleg KBD type comps full of power pop classics and obscurities. Its really rad because it turns me on to a lot of bands I would otherwise not know existed, but what sucks is they are pretty cheap and crappy looking boots with hefty price tags. Most will run you about $15. My problem is this: $15 for a 12-song comp with maybe two or three really outstanding songs. With that same $15 I can usually go on eBay and find one of the singles I liked. They really know how to get you by the short hairs and give you a good yank. Vol. 10 is really something special the entire B-side is made up of good songs. From DAVID QUINTON'S original version of the STIV BATORS classic "Make Up Your Mind" (off of the equally fantastic *Disconnected* album), to SKYMNING's "En Angel," this record rules my world. I seriously question my mental health for buying these sometimes but when they make a volume like this you just gotta say "I'm a record junkie and that's fine." Perfect for anyone who is testing the waters of power pop and mod (on a related note, a friend of mine told me about this hipster musical dictionary that defines terms and the definition of power pop was: "blanket statement for commercially unsuccessful, marginally catchy rock made between 1977-1983"...I thought that was funny).

Recess Records just released TOYS THAT KILL's second LP. Anyone and everyone knows I loved FYP and played the fuck out of TOYS THAT KILL's first LP so it's no real surprise that it's been sitting on my turntable every day since I moved in to my apartment. Todd and Sean have always been able to mix snotty and moronic with insightful and heartfelt and then fallow it up with a catchy and ear-pleasing chaser. Apparently this record was mostly financed by the band's nonstop touring last year with DILLINGER FOUR, I think they even incorporated a little

D4 into their mix. A great follow-up. My only complaint is it's a pic disc in a normal LP sleeve. Pic discs bug me for two reasons; 1) you can never see the grooves and 2) nine times out of ten they are butt ugly. Oh, well, what are you gonna do? www.recessrecords.com

The USUALS from Japan just released two incredible 45's. Reminding me a bit of the TWEEZERS and RAYDIOS but with boy/girl vocals. Really good stuff and I highly recommend checking them out.

Get Hip just put out FREDDY AND THE FOUR GONE CONCLUSIONS' *Wigged Out Sounds* CD. They cover a lot of ground in the garage genre. Nothing lo fi or anything, but they do deliver up a lot of soul-filled hip shakers ala early MAKERS (although a lot cleaner), 60s garage pop, a kick ass DEL SHANNON cover with Max Crook, the man responsible for Del's amazing musitron keyboard lines, lending a hand. They actually sound like an authentic group from the 60s. Pretty good stuff, but boy did they pack a lot on to one CD. A lotta songs and enhanced computer CD-Rom junk. Now that wouldn't be a band thing if these guys didn't look like such dorks. I swear they were all math teachers at my high school. www.gethiprecords.com

BOTTOM LINE:

• I really miss the Hearts. Who am I going to freak out about now?

• Sacramento is hot. I wanna go home. Actually it's not so bad; we're having fun, but between the nosebleeds and allergies I'm dying.

• My new address is 2930 33rd St. Apt A, Sacramento, CA 95817 but if you are going to send me anything send it to Apt C because I have a small mail box and I don't want the crackheads and whores to steal my stuff. The mailman will leave all packages with my upstairs neighbors and those kids are always home so I don't have to worry.

* As always, revmanic@cs.com

Mid-Tour Report from CrimethInc. Barn-storming Troupe Number One

out of the radical ghetto and into near-insurrection in two weeks flat

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

We'd been in front of the federal courthouse for over ten minutes, and the police still hadn't showed up. There were just short of one hundred of us there, some beating drums, some dancing, some setting US flags on fire while others cut them down from the flagpoles, still others spraypainting anarchist slogans in great big letters across the concrete—a lot more people than I would have expected to join a spontaneous midnight march in the sleepy college town of Columbia, Missouri, and getting a lot more out of hand, too! My favorite part might have been the cars that had joined us, riding behind the parade-like floats, which were now driving in circles around the fountain in the courthouse plaza, off the street and out of order. It was one of those situations in which the potential wildness usually buried by daily life under capitalism comes bursting to the surface, making every law and limit seem negotiable—but I fear I'm getting ahead of myself.

Our tour started off quietly enough, with the usual practical setbacks: by the end of our first week, for example, both the 18-passenger van and the hatchback car we had started out in had died, and the remaining five of us had to pack ourselves, our four crates of literature, and all our performance equipment into the ancient little pickup truck a friend was generous enough to drive up for us from four states away. Despite all this—we're no flyweights, we don't let logistical difficulties of any extremity interfere with our plans—we played at a couple coffeehouses, a couple radical collective spaces, a couple basements, a teen center (!), a neighborhood barbecue (!!), and one intentional community out in the countryside. Of those, the last was probably the most interesting experience: we often forget about our radical brothers and sisters living on rural communes, and it was inspiring to see an entire functioning community set up along cooperative lines; at the same time, they desperately need groups like ours to come through and connect them to the outside world, and that is a role more touring troupes could play. Our show is a variety theater of manifestos, poetry, puppetry, and folk music, all coming from an anarchist perspective, complete with a contestoria (read "giant photocopied roll of paper ripped off from Kinko's," for those of you not well-versed in variety theater terminology) telling the story of Nestor Makhno's role in the Ukrainian anarchist resistance. Working with such a wide variety of media is our way of hijacking the network mostly used by traveling musicians for the many other things that are worth doing and other kinds of people who should be able to participate. It also helps us to avoid being easily classified, and thus to be both accessible and challenging in the widest possible variety of settings. In addition to the performances, we've also offered a skillshare in each town, trading information on how to drop banners, sabotage fast food franchises, and apply the latest in guerrilla beautification tactics for whatever skills and information locals could share with us. In this way, we hope to help make anarchist thinking and action a visible, enticing alternative to the usual bullshit out there.

Our experiment seems to work to the extent that the people organizing shows for us manage to put them on outside the usual radical ghetto. When we perform in punk and anarchist strongholds to confirmed DIY anarchists alone, the best we can hope to do is reaffirm the values of our community and encourage each other; we shouldn't underestimate the importance of that, but when our shows are in spaces frequented by people of other walks of life, we can do all that and initiate new conversations and connections at the same time. Those organizing such events in the future would do well to take this to heart: put them on in places that people in communities adjoining the anarchist underground will also come to, so we'll have the chance to grow and learn from others as well.

Our show in Columbia, Missouri two nights ago was a perfect example of a successfully organized event: it took place in an independent theater frequented by people of a variety of backgrounds, and was well-publicized too. Tabling in front of the place during the movies before our performance, we were engaged in conversation by an older woman whose daughter was exploring anarchism, who took some of our literature with her; and when people showed up for our act after the movie, the room was packed with a rowdy, diverse crowd spanning two generations.

It is a myth perpetuated by hierarchical culture that performers are responsible for the quality of performances. Not so! Audiences, being vaster in numbers and playing the role of judge and jury, are always the ones who determine the atmosphere and thus the qualities of any event. That night, everyone in attendance brought a great energy to the place. We chose to wrap up our set with our faux-Ukrainian folk song about molotov cocktails, but the real show was only getting started. As has mysteriously occurred at many of the shows we've attended over the past year, the last song concluded with the audience pouring into the streets for an impromptu parade. At first, it was only a few people beating drums, but once others saw that this was possible, everyone joined in. Bucket drums and even banners appeared as if from nowhere.

We marched in a circle many blocks wide, and the police—unprepared in this quiet place—didn't show themselves. They didn't appear until the last of us were dispersing from the federal courthouse plaza, burnt flags and public art installations in our wake. There were a few stragglers picked off in arrests at that point, I'm sorry to say, and we spent the remainder of the night helping a few particularly levelheaded local activists

negotiate their release from captivity. Around dawn, when everyone was released from jail (with the unfortunate exception of one local who had been picked up on an outstanding warrant), we re-packed the truck and set out, unslept and adrenaline-wired, for our next destination.

A quick comment on those arrests: this was the fifth entertainment event I've experienced in the last year that culminated in a surprise reclamation of public space, and the only one to include arrests. It seems to me that these could have been avoided easily if the people who escalated the situation by initiating vandalism had done so in a way that did not put the heat on their companions in the street, or if they had been better prepared to protect others once the police arrived, or if those others, seeing them escalating the situation and understanding that the risk of arrest was now higher, had moved to get out of the danger area in time, or if everyone had simply dispersed a few seconds earlier and more smoothly. Such actions, originating in the spontaneous energy of crowds, don't and shouldn't answer to any one person's or group's idea of what they should be, but they can only take place when we look out for one another as well as ourselves and trust each other to do the same, so each of us can set our own level of risk without fear that others will get us in over our heads. It's absolutely critical that we learn from our losses in such situations, and thus prevent future debacles. That's one of the important roles such test runs play: they help us secure experience to prepare ourselves for greater confrontations and celebrations.

Back to our story. Having left Columbia at dawn, we arrived here in Indianapolis at an embattled infoshop in an even more embattled Indianapolis ghetto, and delivered our skill-share on do-it-yourself street mosaics and other direct-action/communication tactics. Late that night as a dramatic thunderstorm was just coming to an end, a power box at the end of the block was struck by lightening. Near-delirious from sleep deprivation, I went out to watch the electrical fire that burned at the top of the telephone pole for the next half hour; it was brighter than a dozen suns, exploding over and over like the fourth of July, sparks and molten metal showered the ground below: a little preview of the fireworks that are going to hit when the industrial system finally crashes entirely. The fire department showed up but could do nothing, and by the time the power company arrived a half hour later a small crowd of folks from the neighborhood had gathered to watch. At the moment they cut off the power to the whole area, the guy behind me deadpanned "all right, time to get the crowbar." No wonder we're doing our work in predominantly white, partly middle class communities—everyone else is just about ready to go!

True, those neighbors won't always join us in our practice runs and protests, or for that matter in our anarchist tent-revivals. Many of them must feel there's no sense in getting targeted or arrested any more than they already are—at least not until they can run those risks in return for an opportunity to make permanent changes. But in every community that opens its arms, in every performance that ends in passionate conversation or unpermitted marching, we're laying the groundwork to do our part to create that opportunity. Sometimes that foundation gets torn up, as people give up or get stuck in ruts, and we have to start again—but we do start again, and we lay it back down, and the towering hierarchies start to topple.

Tomorrow we'll leave for a campsite outside Louisville, Kentucky, to meet with the others that have been traveling and performing like the two groups sleeping here tonight. We'll exchange skills and inspiration, cement relationships, and talk through what to do next to take our lives back. It may not be as dramatic as a crowd burning flags on federal property in the witching hour of the night—it may just look like a few dirty kids sitting around a fire, chatting—but whatever it is it will be dangerous in all the best ways, because we're coming to know our own strength.

After the convergence, this particular barnstorming experiment will be over, but we'll be applying the experiences we gained in new rabble-rousing touring groups. If you'd like to host one of them in your own community, or exchange skills and ideas, try contacting us at barnstormingsummer@yahoo.com, or writing to CrimethInc. Barnstorming Brainstorming, 2695 Rangewood Drive, Atlanta, GA 30345 USA. Yours for the smashing of bad stuff and the nurturing of good stuff, CrimethInc. Secret Agent Brian Storming.

I wrote a column a while back about selecting a tour van. I've also written about setting up and booking tours. This month as I get ready to head out on the road with Damage Deposit I thought it would be a good idea to share a sort of pre-tour checklist of what to bring and do before you leave.

I calculated that I've spent just short of two full years on the road since 1990, albeit a few weeks or months at a time. I won't claim to be the most experienced in these matters; someone like Richard the Roadie makes me look like an amateur, but I have learned a few things over the years.

In the last few years of setting up shows here in Minneapolis, we had a lot of cancellations. Most of these are due to vehicle breakdowns, some due to personnel problems, and some due to just poor planning. The more you prepare in advance before you leave, the less hassle, crisis, and stress you are going to have on the road. The most minor problems on the road can turn into big ordeals when there are long drives ahead and a tight schedule to keep. Being in unfamiliar territory and not having the option of shopping around, plus being in a time crunch, means you might have to pay too much for too little.

Below is a tour checklist of stuff you should bring or do. While there is something romantically stupid about just throwing your gear in the van and hitting the road, a little planning and preparation might spare you hours or days of being stranded in the middle of nowhere or scrambling to find strings an hour after you are supposed to be at a show. Remember, when you miss a show you not only shoot yourself in the foot, but you also let down all the people who set up shows for you and the kids who wanted to see you.

Don't underestimate the personnel side of touring. Before you go on some massive nine-week tour, play lots of weekend shows and do a short tour or two. Make sure you can get along with the people in your band. Touring kills a lot of bands as disparate personalities rub up against one another in close quarters. Don't bring anyone's girlfriend (or boyfriend) or an entourage. This is just going to cause friction. Think and act as a team and stay focused—hang out with your friends and shit after the tour. Having 20 of your friends follow you around might seem cool, but it will massively burden the people who are feeding you and putting you up and lead to lots of delays. Each extra person adds more "special needs" mouths to feed and delays that hinder the efficient operation of your tour. I once went on a three-band tour with 14 people. Even the simplest stop to get gas and piss would turn into an hour-long ordeal. Save this kind of stuff for going on a road trip to a fest or something.

Before you tour, get the best van you can possibly afford (see my column about tour vans) and do all the regular preventative maintenance. Change the oil, flush the transmission, and check the fluids. Take it to a good mechanic and have it tuned up, check the brakes, tires, front end, belts and hoses, gearboxes, and all other wear parts. Fix this stuff now and save a lot of time and money later.

Get a notebook or folder and put together directions and

contact info for all your shows on the tour. Get a good road atlas and check everything. Don't just blindly follow mapquest type computer directions—cross-reference everything with an actual map. Get contact numbers for all the promoters and places you are playing so you can call if you are late or lost. Make a copy of this and leave it at home or upload it to your band's site so you can replace it if it's lost or damaged.

Put all your tour dates and show locations on your band/label's website. I'm stunned how few bands bother to do this. Even if you think computers are total shite, you have to realize that there are thousands of young people today whose *only* source of information is the internet. A lot of kids were totally confused about the last Tragedy tour because there wasn't much info on the web. An ad in *MRR* is awesome, but today you should back it up with some info on the web as well.

Bring lots of shirts, buttons, stickers, records, CDs, tapes, whatever to sell. Get local labels to give you stuff to sell on consignment. Bring your old *Star Wars* comics—anything you can peddle on the road will augment the meager pay you will get when you play with four other out of town bands for ten people on a Monday night. Go into record stores and try to trade them your stuff. See if you can sell or trade your records to distros who are set up at shows. You are the best sales force for your own music. Don't rely on your label to promote and sell your record for you.

Here's some stuff you should bring:

- A flashlight—preferably a big Maglite because you can also use it as a weapon.
- Lots of duct tape—this should be self-explanatory.
- Make a key to the van for every band member. This way you will never be locked out and won't be trying to find your drummer so you can unlock the van to get your guitar.
- A good tool kit, for fixing both your van and your gear. A socket set, pliers, screwdrivers, channel locks, etc. A soldering iron, wire strippers, zip ties, electrical tape. Lots of instruments today use metric hex head screws, so bring a set of Allen wrenches for those.
- I've talked about how important it is to bring lots of merch before, but you should also think about bringing a cheap clamp light or drop light for dark clubs and basements so people can see your stuff.
- An extension cord and power strip. I've seen a lot of shows grind to a halt over these two items being absent.
- A basic first aid kit: bandaids, gauze, tape, antibiotic ointment, maybe some aspirin.
- Jumper cables.
- Fuses, for your amps, or the PA that's going to blow. I've seen more than one show grind to a halt for want of a 25-cent fuse.
- Towing insurance/roadside assistance. You can probably get this very cheaply through your auto insurance company or cell phone plan. A few bucks a month might save your ass when you need to get towed or pulled out of a ditch.
- A cell phone—OK, even if you think these are stupid, buy a cheap one just for tour. Having a phone on the road has saved my ass more than once. Being able to call and get better directions, tell someone you are going to be late, etc., can make all the difference.
- Bring lots of strings and drum sticks. It's hard to find a music store to begin with and even harder late at night and on weekends.
- Bring batteries and film and stuff like that. I've wasted so much time driving around looking for some dumb film for some dumb camera because someone in a band I was driving needed it.

A lot of bands these days keep their merch in those dumb plastic tubs. I think those things are goofy and waste a lot of space in your van. I built sturdy wooden boxes for my record distro so I wouldn't have any warped or bent up records at shows. Ditch the plastic tub for the shirts and get a big hockey-type duffel bag instead. This is easier to cram into spaces between amps and gets smaller as you sell more shirts, freeing up space in the van. It's also a good idea to roll up all your shirts really tight and tape them up with masking tape and write the size on the tape. This makes it so much easier to find the right size and design of shirt in conditions of poor lighting, and keeps the shirts from getting all tangled up with each other. It also makes it very fast and easy to restock your duffel bag as shirts sell out.

Make sure you have your license, registration, insurance, etc. straight and paperwork for all of it. Small town cops love to fuck with out-of-towners and they will demand all of this shit. I recently spaced putting the insurance card in the van when a band was using it and got a $75 ticket for failure to show proof of insurance.

Put a tape deck in your van so you can rock out and sing along to Judas Priest while driving through the desert in the middle of the night. That stretch of wasteland between Dallas and Phoenix just calls out for ZZ Top, AC DC, and Megadeth karaoke echoing across the desert. Seriously, no matter how core you are, playing and being around hardcore all day every day might start to grate on you. This is why you should bring some T. Rex and Black Sabbath tapes to unwind with so you don't get totally burned out.

It's also a good idea to put all your records in plastic sleeves so they don't get ring wear just from bumping up and down in the van. I know the last Tragedy record and the last Vitamin X LP both had covers that wore off very easily. Without plastic sleeves these records look like shit after a week bouncing around in the van.

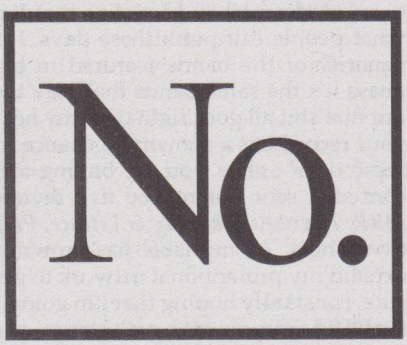
Always think about the worst-case scenario and have a back-up plan. Try to think ahead and assume anything that can go wrong will.

All right, let's shift gears here. I pay attention to fanzines because I run a record label and getting my stuff reviewed is important to me. There are a handful of really good zines, true fanzines, done by fans that are totally into the music they cover and don't fuck around with most bullshit. *Game of The Arseholes* is my favorite; *Town of Hardcore* also comes to mind. These guys only interview or review bands that fit their focus and interest and just ignore the rest. I look at a lot of the bigger zines that come in the mail and I realize that I'm *really* out of touch with what people call punk these days. I don't know who the vast majority of the bands featured in bigger "punk" zines are. I guess it's the same bands that play the Warped Tour and stuff, but that shit all goes right over my head. What I do know is that your record has a snowball's chance in hell of getting reviewed these days unless you are buying an ad. When my label first started, I sent out maybe five review copies of each release: *MRR, Heart Attack, Slug & Lettuce, Profane Existence,* and one or two others. As my label has grown, I've consistently tried to expand my promotional network to get more reviews and exposure, constantly hoping that I'm going to get a work in edgewise for DIY hardcore in the mainstream of punk. However, now that I mail out like 60 or 70 promo copies of each release, I'm still lucky to get reviews in ten zines. Most of my stuff winds up at used record stores or in the trash. So why bother? For a small label without much advertising budget, a review is all the publicity you can hope for, and a good review might turn on some people to your band/label who ordinarily wouldn't check it out. So it's a shot in the dark, crossing your fingers you get your stuff reviewed. I'm even happy to get bad reviews. *Heart Attack* once shit-canned one of my releases in two words: "Bad Punk" But hey, at least someone with an opinion listened to it and printed that. Bad publicity is still some publicity, and we all got a kick out of that review. I still chuckle at the trashing given to Aus Rotten's first 7" in *Heart Attack*, a 7" that went on to sell over 20,000 copies. But if your record never gets reviewed, you lose even a bad review to laugh about. And most zines don't review or cover bands unless the labels advertise heavily in them. Or they only review the stuff that labels with big promotional budgets mail to them for free. This has lead to massive homogenization of the music press on par with that in the mainstream.

Every zine features the same handful of bands on the same handful of labels, and is full of ads for those bands' releases on those record labels. This reminds of me of the top 40 shit where they play the same crappy song so many times that people actually start to think it's good and go buy the CD. Really mediocre bands with slick CDs, posters, lots of half-page zine ads, banner ads on the web, radio promo, and a lot of uncritical fawning in the press become really successful mediocre bands. It's harder then ever for a label without a big promotional budget to get a word in edgewise, so the scum rises and the truly great bands stay unheard.

Which brings me to my next point. At the moment in the US there is a sudden fascination with Japanese hardcore. I've been listening to Japanese HC for quite some time, and there are a few generalizations you can make regarding its popularity. The bar is set much higher in Japan as far as quality and musicianship. Sound and image are taken seriously and bands generally don't play out or record until they have a coherent, tight sound and often image as well. This should be a given, but I think it stands in contrast to a lot of American punk and hardcore right now. I think the popularity of Japanese HC is like a backhanded comment on the low quality of much of the American scene at the moment. The mainstream stuff is about the most mediocre it could be and the DIY stuff, which should be an alternative, is so half-assed and premature that it just cowers in fear in the face of really tight, powerful, well rehearsed and thought-out, and well produced hardcore from Japan. I'm not trying to stir up some US vs. Japan core war here, just giving out an opinion. We could be doing a better job with DIY hardcore in America.

Last item. I've been heavily into metal-influenced stuff lately: English Dogs, Broken Bones, Crumbsuckers, Accused, Cryptic Slaughter, etc. I got started on this kick from hearing bands like Holier Than Thou and DFA bringing back the thrash/metal/hardcore crossover and I forgot how rad some of that 1986-87 metallized HC was. For all the damage done to hardcore during the metal crossover years, it did breed some wicked bands. Now, off to crank some Excel.



Bands and their vans, vans and their bands. It's a symbiotic thing, you understand. No one forces a group of people into a small, temperamental box for months on end—it's just something that some people do, and there really ain't much anyone can say to dissuade them from it. Ruined relationships, ruined minds, ruined bodies, and more can result from this, but it's also how a lot of these people stay alive in the only way they know how, and that's about the long and short of it.

Fred and Derrick of Zero Tolerance Task Force died in a van accident in late July on the way home from Pueblo, Colorado. I got to hang out with them a day before when they came down to Colorado Springs to see us and try to jump on our show. They didn't get to play, which is fucked, because the people in my band and myself are some of the people who liked their band the most, and after 15 goddamn years of DIY touring and obscurity other people were really starting to like them, too. They were possibly the dirtiest sounding band I've ever heard, plus they were some genuinely sweet people and good friends. They also fucked shit up with verve and aplomb...Here's an example:

"Throughout their troubled tenure, Zero Tolerance Task Force encountered resistance when gigging out. In the late 80s Fred booked a ZTTF gig at a biker bar just outside his neighborhood. The manager, whose wife booked the show just to irritate him, was not amused. After the band backed up comic singer Fish Karma, the ire of the regulars and manager, all members of a nearby motorcycle club, grew to dangerous levels. The show climaxed in a near-riot when the bikers began raining tomatoes, bottles and other debris on the second band in the line-up. Just before furniture began to fly more than a dozen units from the Pima County Sheriffs surrounded the bar and the place was suddenly flooded with deputies, one for every biker in the joint. Although Zero Tolerance Task Force never got to play, looking over at Fred one could see his eyes beaming with glee at the chaos."

Fred Janis is survived by his daughter.

Sorry. This is depressing the fuck out of me. Be fucking careful when you travel around.

Senseless losses...I didn't really know most of these folks, but a lot of people I know did, and they are sorely missed. Adam, Jeremy, and Matt from Exploding Hearts, R.I.P.

Orion and Angela from Spooky Dance Party/Reeks and the Wrecks, R.I.P.

Scotty from Karp/The Whip, R.I.P.

"Don't tell us what to say,
Or they'll tell you what to do
And they'll tell us what to think, all along the lines of virtue
And it is not that we don't want it,
We always seem to make due
We must face the facts
We march because we have to
What the fuck got inside your head
What makes you think that way?
If I were you, I'd wish myself dead
Find another place to lie
And stay there for a long fuckin' time
Go and ask one simple question,
And they'll make you read your books
And they'll make you stand in line
With the class defining crooks
They'll tell you not to do it
Then what the fuck should I do?
And it all just brings the shit
And we march because we have to
What the hell is all this strife
When I can't even walk away
What is this shit that we call life
And why do I feel like I'm wasting away the best years of it?
Well it's not that we don't want it
We always seem to make due, but when
It all turns to shit, and it all still
Feels like high school, and we gotta face
The facts, I can't live this life by my rules
It's all just a fucking shame and we march because we have to
In the end I cannot walk away
When some will live and most will die
I'll see you again in 20 years
When we will watch the others march by."
—*"We March" by We March*

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A People's Herstory & Curse for October

This month, I threw my column out the window. Last month I promised more tour stories, and wrote them up, but now I have more pressing tales to tell, a bit of history and mayhem followed with curses and ill will. This is the October

issue of *MRR*, and Halloween will be close at hand.

Halloween is a crass commercial American holiday promoted by the candy companies. It is also a small remnant of a very old Irish Celtic culture that celebrated the power of the Earth Mother, and was smashed by the Christians during the Middle Ages.

As many MISFITS fans know, Halloween has its roots in the Celtic holiday of Samhain–a day when the harvest was over, the summer ended, and the dark and dangerous days of winter began. The ìveil between the worlds" was at its thinnest, dead roamed the night, and chaos reigned.

In the 1840s, Irish immigrants brought a modern version of the folk tradition of celebrating Halloween to the US.

Despite the Baptists, protective parents, and the Hershey company, Halloween still holds a tiny spark of anti-authority. I remember the thrill of being very young and running around the neighborhood at night with my sister, dressed up as a witch, demanding "trick or treat" from the neighbors.

"Give us what we want, or we will take it!"

The nights grow longer, time changes, and chaos reignsóso I begin my story of past witches on the prowl.

WITCH: Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell

WITCH was born on Halloween, 1968 in New York City.

A group of women dressed as witches called themselves the Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (a name that, today, evokes images of Ashcroft's agents knocking on the door) and marched down Wall Street cursing the headquarters of US capitalist greed straight to hell. The NY Stock Exchange was hexed, along with banks and brokerage firms. A witch circle was invoked inside the Morgan Guaranty Trust building, disrupting business-as-usual with spells and chants as baffled men looked on.

Afterwards, the Stock Market dropped five points.

Ha!

1968 had been an intense yearóthe Women's Liberation Movement first gained national attention by crashing the Miss America Pageant in Atlanta, and the phrase "sisterhood is powerful" was used for the first time.

The antiwar movement was reaching its high point. After the Tet Offensive in January '68, the Vietnam War lost the majority of popular US support, and both antiwar actions and police brutality became more extreme. Draft boards in Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Chicago were raided, and activists smeared blood on records and shredded files. Antiwar activists also targeted DOW Chemical, makers of Napalm, and damaged offices and factories.

Bloody 1968 also ushered in the FBI program of infiltration and sabotage of left-wing groups known as COINTELPRO. Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, and many cities burned. In August, during the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the nation watched on television as police beat, clubbed, arrested, fought, and maced hundreds of people in Lincoln Park and in the streets surrounding the convention.

Things were shitty.

The state made clear that dissent would be responded to with violence, domestic espionage, and repression; hundreds of American body bags were flying home each week; and an entire generation of two million Vietnamese was being lost to war.

In this context, women's action and consciousness-raising groups were beginning to grow. Women within organizations such as SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) were tired of being told to make the coffee, clean the headquarters and follow the men, and started their own groups such as the NY Radical Women, that stated, "We define the best interests of women as the best interests of the poorest, most insulted, most despised, most abused women on earth."

WITCH was similar to NY Radical Women, but focused on *direct action* characterized by pageantry, creative expression, and humor. After the New York WITCH action against Wall Street, autonomous Covens formed in several cities around the country–including Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, Austin, and Portland–and carried out actions against a wide variety of institutions.

In Washington, DC, WITCH hexed the United Fruit Company for its oppressive polices in Central America, and for its sexist treatment of workers in the US. The group chanted, "Bananas and rifles, sugar and death / War for profit, tarantulas' breath / United Fruit makes lots of loot / The CIA is in its boot," and condemned corporate America.

Many WITCH Covens denounced marriage as an instrument of capitalism and patriarchy that demanded women obey, conform, and become commodities in a marriage market. WITCH groups disrupted local bridal fairs where companies–many of them involved in exploitive and racist worker policies internationally–sold young brides-to-be everything from make-up to vacuum cleaners.

The Boston WITCH Covens chanted, "Down with chains / chains on brains / shackled by beauty games / Hex on Masters' / Ego games / Free us from the auction block...HEX THAT GAME / LEARN TO FIGHT."

New York Covens

Below, as a Halloween Treat, I have included a statement from the New York Covens about the revolutionary power of witches. It is copied (with minor omissions for length) from my much loved and first edition of *Sisterhood is Powerful, an anthology of writings from the Women's Liberation Movement*, edited by Robin Morgan, published in 1970. I usually wouldn't include such a long quote, but I thought the piece was inspiring. Just the kind of thing to read during a dark time such as this. Enjoy!

"WITCH is an all-women Everything. It's theater, revolution, magic, terror, joy, garlic flowers, spells, It's an awareness that witches and gypsies were the original guerrillas and resistance fighters against oppressionóparticularly the oppression of womenódown through the ages. Witches have always been women who dared to be: groovy, courageous, aggressive, intelligent, nonconformist, explorative, curious, independent, sexually liberated, revolutionary. (This possibly explains why nine million of them have been burned)...

[Witches] bowed to no man, being the living remnants of the oldest culture of allóone in which men and women were equal sharers in a truly cooperative society, before the death-dealing sexual, economic, and spiritual repression of the Imperialist Phallic Society took over and began to destroy nature and human society.

WITCH lives and laughs in every women. She is the free part of each of us, beneath the shy smiles, the acquiescence to absurd male domination, the make-up or flesh-suffocating clothing our sick society demands. There is no "joining" WITCH. If you are a woman and dare to look within yourself, you are a Witch. You make your own rules. You are free and beautiful. You can be invisible or evident in how you choose to make your witch-self be known. You can form your own Coven of sister Witches (thirteen is a cozy number for a group) and do your own actions.

Whatever is repressive, solely male-oriented, greedy, puritanical, and authoritarian–those are your targets. Your weapons are theater, satire, explosions, magic, herbs, music, costumes, cameras, masks, chants, stickers, stencils and paint, films, tambourines, bricks, brooms, guns, voodoo dolls, cats, candles, bells, chalk, nail clippings, hand grenades, poison rings, fuses, tape recorders, incense–your own boundless beautiful imagination.

Your power comes from your own self as a woman and it is activated by working in concert with your sisters. The power of the Coven is more than the sum of its individual members, because it is *together.*

You are a Witch by saying aloud, 'I am a Witch' three times, and *thinking about that.* You are a Witch by being female, untamed, angry, joyous, and immortal."

Curses

Here, in October 2003, thirty-five years after the first WITCH hex, we live with familiar cruel happenings.

Corporations and financial institutions hijack the lives of workersóand create nothing but inequality and poverty around the world. A ridiculous US government (like all of ones before) is in the midst of imperialist wars, spending the blood of young Americans, wrecking untold misery and destruction to millions of women, men and children living in Afghanistan, Iraq and wherever US guns are sold. Freedom and justice, here at home, seems also to be in short supply. Ahh, the same, ol' story!

What to do? Of course, as always, cause a ruckus.

In the spirit of WITCH, this Halloween let me start with a Curse, spit through my teeth, hurled with yellow bile from hell:

I Curse Bush for all his LIES!

"A war for Iraqi Liberation"

LIES!

"Leave no child behind"

LIES!

Bush leaves only the poor children behind, liberates only bombs. (Can you hear the screams?)

I curse the Capitalists that profit from war. Haliburton! The oil barons! The gun makers and the bomb factories!

I feed the fire and strength of DISSENT.

Dissent is necessary, and it gives Donald Rumsfeld the hives.

I spit on our system of STATE that operates for the sole purpose of protecting money.

I give thought to the Witches who came before me, strong women who stood their ground, cared for others, gave wisdom and strength to their Covens.

Plan something for this Halloween. And to all WITCHES, take to the air! Reclaim! Resist! Exist!

Last Thoughts

This column is about women, but written for everyone. Cheers to men who support equality and women's rights! "Feminism is for Everybody," as bell hooks says, and *both* women *and men* benefit when sexism is defeated.

I now have a PO box. Please send witches' greetings, fanzines, and notes to: Erika R, PO Box 391273, Cambridge, MA 02139. The lost tour column and my band the PROFITS can be found at www.theprofits.org.

Cherished records of the month: CALLOUSED, *The Rebound of Evolution.* Amazing, powerful, melodic, brutal, and right-on lyrics all at once. Also RE-SISTERS *Riots Not Diets* 7". Smashing the beauty myth, living free and fighting, a group of women playing creative pissed-off music, leaving blood on squats all across Europe.

August Show of the Month: American Legion Hall, Nashua, NH. The keyboard riffs and melodies of JONEE EARTHQUAKE BAND songs are still stuck in my head, "Up with piracy!" THE KNOX also played a rousing version of "All Cops Are Bastards" which prompted a sixty-person sing-along. Thanks to 20 TO 1 who organized this all-day punk fest. Free veggie burgers included!

Sources of information used in this article:

• *Lesbian Feminist Chronology: 1963-1970*, By Kate Bedford and Ara Wilson *http://www.womens-studies.ohio-state.edu/araw/chrono1.htm*. Reference points of crucial events during the second wave of the women's movement.

• *Sisterhood is Powerful: An Anthology of Writings from the Women's Liberation Movement.* Edited by Robin Morgan. 1970. If you are interested in learning first-hand about women's thoughts during the 60s Women's Liberation Movement, read this! Available in many good used bookstores.

• "The Origins of Halloween," by Rowan Moonstone, republished at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5452/hallorig.html

ï "Chicago '68: A Chronology," by Dean Blobaum, at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/1553/c68chron.html.

OUT OF MY WAY

TERROR has a ripping new split seven inch out with RINGWORM. TERROR comes out of the shoot with fists of fury on their song, "Out of My Way." This band takes no prisoners—clearly TERROR is one of the best hardcore bands of this ilk! Read some of the lyrics to this mega-blast! "Fucking everything and everybody / Hypocrites and all the fakes / Leeches and the followers / Best to stay out of my way / Out of my face out of my way / So many times you crossed my path / With clenched fists I made my way / Force-fed so many lies / You can't get a hold of me / Out of my face out of my way / Fuck everything you believe / Fuck what you say / So many rats in my face / You won't get the best of me so many the best of me / So many traps set in my way / You could never break me." Yeah!

TERROR then proceeds to power through "Nothing to Lose," with shouted vocals and blistering guitar leads. This is fucking over-the-top hardcore for you headbangers!

RINGWORM is up next with more brutal hardcore for knuckleheads. In "No One Dies Alone," the singer punishes you until the guitar power comes hammering like a sledge on an anvil. RINGWORM has some thoughts to share. Read this: "No one dies alone / You take a piece of me with you / Friendships carved in stone / By yourself but not alone/ Loyalties forged in fire / Will make no sense of this / Lost souls funeral pyre / Show me the way to fates desire / But no one dies alone, no one dies alone / And you call death your own / How can I believe that this was meant to be / The only thing I see lost love a painful eulogy / Flame of life once burned bright / Casting shadows on the memories I've saved / Buried, resting at last in the grave / But no one dies alone, no one dies alone / And you call death your own / Flame of life burnt short / No one dies alone".

Fucking heavy shit! For your very own TERROR / RINGWORM split EP, write to Deathwish Records, www.deathwish-inc.com.

The always brilliant My War Records has another kick-ass punk release ready for you! The band is called VIOLENT MINDS and these fucking punks are playing relentless fast hard-edged punk! The VIOLENT MINDS blow through 'Know It All," "Bloodsucker," "Death Bed," and "I Don't Care" on side one. On side two you get more tightly wound punk rock with merciless guitar attack, shouted vocals with shouted choruses. All fast paced and entertaining!

The words are pointed and filled with youthful rage and frustration. Read "Violent Minds": "Look around, what's going on? / Reality is dead and gone / Chaotic streets takin' hold / Demonic stares turning cold / Violent minds / No time to think, just time to fight / Violent minds / Survivals key, no wrong or right / Pressure building, gonna break / Better act before it's too late / Gotta have a violent mind / Or you'll get left behind." Fucking great punk for you fucks in this EP! Write to My War Records for your copy now!

THRETNING VERSE from sIndustry, California have a stomping new EP out on Puke n' Vomit Records. The EP is called *Time for War*. Pixie Panik sings like a banshee unchained on this raw punk slab! THRETNING VERSE scream through "All Who Hold Us Down," "Time for War," "Gung Ho," and "To The Grave." Fucking punk rock—with a capital P! This is reminiscent of early English Punk like RIOT SQUAD and CHAOS UK. Great shit! Write to Puke n' Vomit Records at PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834.

THE VIRUS, from Philadelphia, has a real good new EP out on Dirty Punk Records, from France. The sleeve and packaging are superior! The new EP is called *Benefits of War* and it contin-

ues THE VIRUS's command of great street punk! The punks careen through the title cut, "Benefits of War," "Keep on Walking," and "Undercover," and finish off nicely with a cover of the BLITZ's song "Nations on Fire." Very good! THE VIRUS is at the top of their game. THE VIRUS has such fucking strong singing and clear-cut guitar and a tight rhythm section! These guys are recognized as one of the leading purveyors of this type of street music! Write to Dirty Punk Music, BP 302, 59666 Villeneuve, D' Asco Cedex, France; dirtypunk@wanadoo.fr. You may also get VIRUS product (and lots of other punk shit) from Punk Core Records at www.punkcore.com.

DRUGSTOP, a young punk outfit from the north of Germany, have a boisterous EP available for you on My Ruin (AKA Rosa) Records. This band has only been around for six months, but they play a really well crafted punk sound! The boys plow through "Drugs," "I Don't Need You," "The Heart of Rock," and "Fight Fight Fight." This is snotty late-70s-style punk played with attitude. Excellent! Write to My Ruin Records, c/o Rosi, Johannistorwall 34a, 49074 Osnabruk, Germany; www.myruin.de.

The RUNNAMUCKS from Casselberry, Florida have another great LP out! The LP is called *Of A Different Breed*, and this one continues where they left off on their fine Kangaroo Records LP six months ago. The boys rip through "Lone Wolf," "Detonation," "Gotta Get A Grip," and end up on "Graveyard"—a real punk rocker! Chugging guitars and full-throat vocals give this a big thumbs up! You get hits like "Addicted to You," "I Gotta Move," "D.R.A.G." "Pull The Plug," "One For My Baby," "When I Feel Like I'm Halfway There," "Of A Different Breed," and "In For The Kill." Check out the lyrics to "In For The Kill": "Don't know where I'm going / Don't know where I am / The only thing I know is that I don't give a damn / And I'm sick and tired of standing still / Just got to go in for the kill / Don't know where to stand except both sides of the fence / And my every plan doesn't make any sense / I'm tired, I'm wired, I'm standing still / Just got to go in for the kill / Barreling down the road / Got no gas in the tank / Sinking to a new low, at least I got tunes to crank / And I'm sick and tired of what you do / And I'm sick and tired of what you say / Don't know where I'm going / Don't know where I am / The only thing I know is I don't give a damn / Broken down in a flow of distortion / Stuck here in a mental traffic jam / I don't know where the hell I'm going / I don't know where the fuck I am."

Fucking great! The RUNNAMUCKS can run the gamut from fast hardcore to solid rock 'n' roll Memphis style. Write to Six Weeks Records, 225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931.

ASSERT, who assailed you with a powerful split EP with SWELLBELLYS on Intimidation Records (Scotland), has a new full length! The new CD is called *Righteous Assembly* and it fucking rocks!

ASSERT formed in 1995 and released the self-financed *Assert Yourself* in 1996. After two releases on London's Household Name Records, the band began to command the respect they deserve. Tours with AGNOSTIC FRONT, MADBALL, DROPKICK MURPHYS, CROMAGS, NAPALM DEATH, and EXPLOITED have furthered the depth of their fan base. The new CD stays political and angry. The vocals are shouted and impassioned. The solid bass and drums give the guitarist a chance to experiment with some creative melodies. The lyrics of these songs capture some of the pissed-off attitudes of ASSERT. Read the words to "Red Beat and Blood": "Articulate and demonstrate firmly where you stand / Don't want to see a bible or raising of your hand / It's understood red beat and blood / Red blood flows through my veins I ain't no true blue / If you won't stand up with me I will shout fuck you / Lead our lives the way we choose that's the way it's got to be / See into the future by making history / Actions speak louder than words, keep talking all night long / Well aware that it takes more than singing protest songs."

Yes! ASSERT rip through 13 conventional studio tracks and two "live" (in the studio) tracks. All the songs are packed with venom and first-rate musicianship. Punk as fuck! Write to Hardboiled Records, Vindegrade 101, DK 5000, Odense, C, Denmark; www.hardboiled.music.com.

Steel Cage Records from Philadelphia has a couple of rock 'n' roll CDs prepared for you punks.

First on the menu is the RESISTOLEROS with a well-honed rock 'n' roll approach to their new punk CD entitled, appropriately, *Rock 'n' Roll Napalm*. The RESISTOLEROS have been playing out regular in the San Francisco Bay Area and have shared the stage with HAMMERLOCK (Steel Cage Records) on several occasions at the BP Psychos compound in Oakland.

The lead singer of the RESISTOLEROS is well known to you veteran punks as "Sammytown" of FANG. SAMMYTOWN works this rock material really well with a JEFF DAHL journeyman approach to this bar room raunch. RESISTOLEROS chug through "I'll Bleed for You," a rocking title cut, and "Rock N' Roll Napalm," with good underpinning like the JONESES from the old days. Then you get a real scorcher, "Break Mine Off," followed by a melodic "Right," and the anthemic DEAD BOYS-style "Juice Boy." Song number eleven is a fucking complete rocker! "Assault & Battery" stirs up some serious guitar frenzy! The final tune is "Caught With Your Panties Down," and STIV BATORS would approve! Steel Cage has another winner in their stable!

The fabulous Leslie G and Larry have a little stab from the past for you psychos! The new CD is Philly's own SICKIDZ and the fresh meat is called *Now and Then*. The legendary SICKIDZ operated out of the Philadelphia in the late 70s and early 80s and mixed a zany MAD DADDIES / CRAMPS style psycho punk into the chaotic blend. The first four tracks are new material and were recorded in Philadelphia in 2002. Track five is a live song from a Trocadero show in Philly in May 2003. The last four tunes are live at The Starlight Ballroom in Philadelphia in August 1980—THE SICKIDZ last live show of the era. The sound on the old material is adequate and the new songs show some enthusiasm. For HAMMERLOCK, LIMECELL, RESISTOLEROS, and SICKIDZ product write: Steel Cage Records, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125; www.steelcagerecords.com.

The ROUGHNECKS, Sacramento, California's popular skinhead band, will have a CD ready for you in early October on Hellcat Records. After two brilliant shows with the TEMPLARS recently, this band has a lot of momentum. Go see the ROUGHNECKS when they come to your town!! Go to sactoroughnecks.com for info.

Until next month....

See you around....

See you fucks at the bar..

CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH...

I mean, what the fuck, two guys, three cute girls. One room. The possibilities are endless. Well, almost. So we leave the club, my arm around Tawny, and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him's arms around two girls.

We get back to my place and go inside. I pull out an extra bed for He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him and his two girls, and me and Tawny get on my bed. We start to make out. Really hard. Suddenly I smell something. Terrible. And it is coming from the bed next to us. The one with He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him and the two girls. I turn on the light, and Tawny quickly pulls down her shirt. He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him asks why I turned the light on so quick, and I tell him something smells, and for everyone to look at their shoes. Everyone does, and we find shit and a bit of toi-

let paper on the bottom of the shoes of He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him. I look around the room and see shit footprints. I scream, "Shit!" and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him says, "yep, that's what it is." We spend the next half hour cleaning the apartment before my parents wake-up, all the time cursing the Stoop-Pooper, and vowing our revenge. The girls giggle and giggle. Finally we get done, and get back to bed. I start to make out with Tawny again, and this time get further. I get my hand down her pink polka-dotted tights, and she sighs with pleasure. It feels really smooth down there. Like she shaved or something. Then I get this sinking feeling of dread. I stop making out. She asks what's wrong and I tell her I am going to turn on the light. She says OK, and I do. He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him and the two girls with him are asleep. I tell Tawny, gimmie your purse. She does. I look for an ID. I find one. It is a fake one from Times Square. Easy to detect. Everyone in New York knows what they look like. Everyone. I ask her how old she really is, because she told me she was eighteen, but I now I wasn't so sure. After a bit of grilling, she tells me she is fourteen. Doh. I later find out from her friends she is thirteen. Double Doh. And later on, like a year or so, the police call me and tell me she ran away from home and they think she will end up on my doorstep. But that's another story.

Rehearsals for The Ayatollahs Of Rock And Roll continued at my parents' apartment. He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him was getting better on the pots and pans, and Seth was learning how to sing. I was actually improving my guitar technique, and Jeff gave up hope that Gilligan would "ever get off that fucking island." We figured, one day we would play a real gig. One day. So we kept practicing. And at night we'd hang out at He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him's father's club, or on my stoop, and drink beer.

"Hi, I'm He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him, and this is my friend George from Florida," He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him would say to all the girls who walked by. They'd look at us funny most of the time, but sometimes they'd stop to talk to us. This one girl, Nina, knew Seth from junior high school, and stopped to talk to us. She said hello to Seth, and asked me if I was really from Florida. I told her that in no way was I from fucking Florida, that I had just spent my college years and money there. She said oh, and began to walk away. He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him poked me in my side and said, "Go after her, she likes you." So I did. I wound up dating her for a while, and the whole time we were going out, He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him would say, "Why does she like you? You think you're such a nice guy, but I know you're not. She shoulda gone out with me." I would explain to him that it wasn't my fault, and if it were anyone's, it was his for saying the "this is my friend George from Florida" shit. But he was jealous anyway, as was Seth, who kept telling me that she didn't have those things on her chest when she was in seventh grade. But it didn't break up the band, which of course, is the important thing.

One night after a day of heavy drinking, one hour of rehearsal, and an afternoon of cartoons, Jeff called me on the phone. He said that Stiv was in town and playing at the Ritz with his new "dopey" band, the Lords Of The New Church, and asked me if I was gonna go. I told him yes, I already got tickets, and was going with Nina. He asked if that was the girl that Seth was talking about with the things on her chest. I said yes. He then asked me what kind of things she had on her chest. Before I could answer, though, he told me he'd see me later, that he had to hang up, that the *Six Million Dollar Man* was back on. I heard that Bionic sound from his television off in the background.

That night at the Ritz, I continued my drinking frenzy from that afternoon. Nina was kinda looking at me funny, and asked if anything was wrong. I told her not really, just that I thought the Lords set pretty much sucked, and Stiv should cut his poofy hair. She asked which one Stiv was.

Eventually we ended up backstage, 'cause Jeff got us in there. We were drinking all the free beer, or at least Jeff and I were. Jeff was telling me that this band sucked, and that the Dead Boys could kick their asses any day of the week. I told him the Lords weren't so bad, and that their first album was actually very good. He just looked at me, then put his thumbs between his forefingers and middle fingers, curled his hand into a fist, and stuck them up in front of his eyes. "I am a bug from Mars," he said, "and I think the Lords suck, those wimpy English fags." I had to laugh. Then this guy who looks like a caveman in a plaid shirt walks up to me and Jeff and Nina. He is one long eyebrow, and looks very familiar. I say to him, "say, weren't you in that movie *The Bad News Bears?* You were that mean kid with the motorcycle, right?" He looks at me funny, then looks at Nina. Nina looks at him. The guys says, "Hi, I'm Matt Dillon, and you are?" Shit. I thought it was Jackie Earl Haley. All those mutant movie kids look alike. Nina starts to talk to the prick and I start getting jealous. I say to Jeff, "hey, that guy is trying to pick up my girlfriend." Jeff puts his fists in front of his eyes again and says, "I am a bug from mars. Zooop, Zooop, Weeee-oooo!" No help here. So I tell Matt Dillon she is with me. He says in his thick Brooklyn accent, "But I'm Matt Dillon." Nina tells me to go get her a drink, and relax. I tell her to get her own fucking drink. Then Matt Dillon says, "Don't talk to her like that." I tell him to stay out of it, and ask him who the hell he thinks he is. "I'm Matt Dillon," he replies. Oh. So I tell Nina we are leaving and turn around to walk out.

Suddenly I am face to face with a guy who looks as pale as me. Or even more. And has poofy hair. "Stiv," I say. "George Tabb," he says back. Me and Stiv know each other. But that's another story. I ask Stiv how he is doing, but he seems kinda preoccupied looking at Jeff with his fists up to his eyes. Suddenly I feel someone push me forward real hard. I turn around and see Matt Dillon. He is laughing his stupid Brooklyn laugh. Putz. So I push him back. He gets pissed and pushes me back. We are about to exchange punches when Matt Dillon notices Stiv Bators staring at Jeff Magnum. He walks up to him and says, "Stiv!" Stiv says, "Matt!!" And they exchange hugs. I leave Stiv and Matt, and the bug from mars, and me and Nina make our way out of the club. She tells me she would have never done anything with Matt Dillon, and just thought he was nice. I said, "Yeah, for a guy who only knows three words."

The next morning we rehearsed as usual, and this time it was Jeff who tracked in the human shit. He kept saying he was sorry, but that he was more sorry about his new sneakers. At that moment I vowed revenge on the Stoop-Pooper. I was tired of cleaning up shit. Actually, Nick, my stepdad, was tired of cleaning up shit. I was tired of smelling it. And tired of making excuses up to Nick why I couldn't clean it up. So I told Jeff, Seth Death, and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him, that tonight was the night we catch the perp. I said we would spend all night outside if we had to, but we would catch him. Seth and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him said OK, that they'd be there, but Jeff wussed out. He said Beth wanted him home to watch the TBS *Leave It To Beaver* marathon.

So there we are, me, Seth Death, and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him, on our first stake-out. I was on the first shift, so I was only allowed to drink three beers an hour, while Seth and He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him could drink more. We had set up camp on a stoop across the street from my parent's apartment on West Fourth Street, and were waiting patiently for the Stoop-Pooper to appear. Off in the distance we heard the Jefferson Market Library clock chime 3:00 AM, and figured it had to be sometime soon. Eventually my mom came out to give us more beer and cookies, and then we sent her back inside. It was dangerous out here. Finally, on Seth's shift, we saw some action. A small, huddled figure made its way down the small staircase to the front of my parents' apartment door. I whispered to He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him that this was the Stoop-Pooper. He told me how did I know, and that I wasn't such a nice guy. And that he should have had Nina. I told him whatever. Seth Death then said to me, "This fucking Stoop-Pooper has had it. We are gonna bust his

fucking head, that piece o' chit. We'll give him a one way ticket to the resurrection." We all looked at each other and decided this was it. It was now or never. So we all turned on our super-bright flashlights we had purchased that day at Lampstons, and ran across the small West Village street. We screamed like Indians on the warpath, or the singer of Roach Motel. When we reached our apartment, we shone the lights on the small figure in front of the door. And sure enough, it was taking a dump. It put its hand to its face, and said in a very gruff voice, "Put those damn lights down, and let me wipe myself." We put down our lights and watched as the Stoop-Pooper took out a roll of toilet paper from its pocket. It wiped, then got up and walked toward us, up the stairs. We backed up, afraid. I yelled lights, and we all turned on the flashlights again. And shone it in its face. What we saw was an old woman. With lots of warts and stuff, and wild gray hair, matted down by a black scarf. Finally I got up the courage to speak. "Why do you poop in front of my door?" I asked her. And she said nothing. We turned out the flashlights, and then she said in a small voice, "that's better." I asked her again why she chose my door, out of any door in the neighborhood to shit in front of. She then said, "Your door is only on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays. I use a door on Charles Street Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays." I said nothing, as did Seth, or He Who Gets Mad When I Write About Him. Then she added, "Listen, do ya think you could clean up the garbage around your door? You should be more clean, you know. It's unhealthy."

Take My Fucking Life, Please.

Curiosity kills the cat, but it also defines the cat. Besides fur and ears, it is what separates the cat from the slug. Similarly, alienation, drugs and alcohol, a disdain for authority, a feeling of no future, a love for violent dancing, bad hygiene, and rash decisions may kill the punk. If so, let him or her go in peace!

Could the cat keep from peeking into a paper bag? And if it could, should that it would? Who would want to turn a cat into a slug that sees through slow, dead eyes and chooses its moves with cold and clammy deliberation? Yet they pluck the punk of its feathers in the name of improving the pedigree!

Let those who wish to remove the self destruction from the soul of the cat and heart of the punk be forewarned: a world full of slugs might be safer, but it would suck. Yea, verily.

FCC Deregulation Leading to More Corporate Control

The time period we live in and the era that is approaching (that so-called "progress" is leading us into) is a scary one. The damage will more than likely be irreversible, yet our blind conquest of everything natural has allowed us to continue this path of destruction without seriously assessing the ramifications. There are several distinguishable factors contributing to this path towards a totalitarian state. One: people are now being subjected to brainwashing on a level that is uncontrollable. The media is the principle force behind this Orwellian nightmare. Two: a small number of corporations are owning more and more as the structure of capitalism is reaching its inevitable state. Three: people dismiss the idea of an era like the one just described as complete nonsense. Events are unfolding before our eyes that support this argument. One in particular is of significant importance, and it might later be recognized as the beginning of the end. In early June of 2003, the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) and federal government (with the support of powerful corporate lobbyist, officials, and broadcasting conglomerates) managed to deregulate legislation that controlled media ownership and concentration. As a result of the deregulation, media corporations are allowed to own more outlets in a given area and one corporation can broadcast their news to more viewers and listeners. "How can something like this happen?" one may wonder. The answer is surprisingly simple. The Federal Communications Commission is a branch of the federal government and it works exactly like the federal government. Corporations fund campaigns, hoping (knowing) that when the funded politician is in office their corporation's lobbyists and officials will have a great influence on legislation benefiting their profit driven motivations. Similarly, media corporations (the main ones including, News Corp./Fox, General Electric/NBC, Viacom/CBS, and Disney/ABC) funded 2,500 junkets of FCC commissioners at a cost of 2.8 million dollars.

This is only the beginning. Millions more are spent in multiple facets to gain influence over future legislation. In our system, the regulators regulate the industry. Simple enough, right? Not any more. Industry and corporations regulate regulators. This new approach to regulation is referred to as "outcome-driven politics." So after our wonderful politicians enjoyed first class flights at the expense of the media industry, they fall to the pressure to deregulate legislation, legislation that will be extremely detrimental to the First Amendment. In fact, the FCC commissioners were given a draft proposal of the deregulation, not even including the new exact laws, only *three weeks* prior to the winning vote. Three weeks. Despite efforts to keep the deregulation plans low key to the mainstream public, the FCC faced significant opposition by consumer, civil rights, labor, and religious groups (not to mention 750,000 direct contacts by the American people to the FCC).

The impact of these laws will change the way we receive information from the media (as if the media didn't lie and wasn't biased prior to the decision), in that many local and independent news sources will be bought out by larger and very influential corporate media outlets. The result: the public receives very filtered and centralized news bias. Any hope for alternative mainstream news ideas that activists have been fighting for years is now out of the picture. One wonders, "Well, these powerful lobbyists had to have some rational reason to want to deregulate beyond their greed, so at least there won't be a public outcry, right?" Their reasoning was that with more media concentration, there is more potential for expansion of media coverage and interests. More money, more opportunities to provide a diverse broadcasting of interests. Don't confuse this with more *viewpoints*. For example, a local region has no classical station on the radio, Mr. Media Corporation buys up the local outlets, and with their money is able to supply a classical music frequency. There has not even been enough time for experts to assess and validate the corporate media's claims of a better broadcasting network. Greed is the real fuel for the fire.

So what can we as independent thinkers and people of this society do about this? One: be open about your opposition—get the details, learn more, and then voice your opinion. Two: *don't support corporate media giants*. Despite some of our extreme animosities towards technology, the internet provides great sources for independent, non-biased news. Check out Indymedia.org, or even other countries' main media outlets, such as the BBC. Three: support public radio and television (even though their demise is near). As we as a people are continually brainwashed by our robotic repetition and instilled beliefs, hope remains for a better, truly democratic future.

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Endnote: please email me with arguments about this issue or anything of interest: duckmyfoot@msn.com. Also email me if you want to receive a copy of *Pariah*, a political zine I work on.

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Some of you might have noticed an awkward jump toward the end of Bob's guest column last month. It was entirely our fault—sorry Bob! One more time, here goes:]

"Extraordinary, how potent cheap music is." Cool quote, huh? Playwright Noel Coward said that. He was referring to cabaret music, but his observation could just as easily be applied to punk. There is something innately powerful in simple, honest, homegrown music. You just don't get the same feeling from slick, commercial dreck like Michael Bolton that you do from watching your buddies jam together in a sweaty garage.

Before I got into punk, I listened to standard hard rock/metal stuff—what is now considered "classic rock." I was big into AC/DC, Black Sabbath, Cheap Trick, Scorpions, and Van Halen. I still like that stuff, too. But I hold it in a different regard than punk. AC/DC et al is just music. Just something that "rocks." Something to listen to in traffic. To me, punk—in all of its forms and offshoots—is on a higher plane. My old band Failure Face had a song called, "Pure Entertainment," which is about how music can be more than just a nice little diversion. Music can take a stance, and I believe the most potent forms of music do just that. Early punk and hardcore was a statement. It was strongly anti-establishment, anti-music biz, anti-authority. Of course, there are still thousands of bands today that have kept this spirit alive, but punk's reputation has been badly damaged by fake shit like New Found Glory, Good Charlotte, and the massively commercial Warped Tour.

A lot of kids just getting into punk these days never knew the unbastardized/commercialized version of punk. They really don't see what's wrong with shrink-wrapped, shopping mall puke like Rancid. They just don't know any better; Black Flag and Dead Kennedys broke up before they were born. So bear with me, folks, as I tell you the story of my first punk show.

It was 1984, arguably the last great year of American hardcore. I was into punk for about a year at that time and had rudimentary knowledge of the bigger bands, like Circle Jerks, Misfits, and Fear. I was starting to read every zine I could get my hands on and making mental notes of bands to check out. I had just become aware of the existence of punk outside of the US and England. Doors were opening. Questions were being answered. An endless journey had begun and somewhere in the dewy mist, a whimsical elf named Pipo danced the jig with an enchanted hedgehog. No, wait a second—that last thing with the elf didn't really happen, but you get the idea. Punk was new and exciting; that's what I was getting at.

An older hardcore kid in my high school woodshop class handed me a flyer for an upcoming show. He told me to be careful and not to let any jocks or rednecks see it. How conspiratorial. Like a secret society that you needed a password to get into. And I was in. The flyer was beautiful: eight and a half by eleven inches, cut and paste and black and white all over. That flyer spent many years on my bedroom wall and I still have it today. It hangs over my record collection. It is still beautiful. "Music For The New Youth!" screamed the bold headline type on the flyer. Hell, yeah. Exactly. A line was drawn in the sand: punks over here and the rest of the world over there. The flyer promised six bands for three bucks. Cheap music, indeed! When my four friends and I got to the show, we discovered, to our disappointment, that Roach Motel, Gay Cowboys In Bondage, and Rat Cafeteria had cancelled. However, the promoter, a terrifically cool dude named Scot Lade, had secured *five more* bands to take the place of the three who had cancelled. The line up was: Foul Existence, No Policy, Scream And The Fits, Nat King Kong, Disorderly Conduct, Jehovah's Sickness, Pagan Faith, and the main band of the evening, the legendary F. Eight bands for three bucks—even better! Viva punk rock!

The show was in a rented hall that I think was part of a fire station. It was the first of many rented hall shows for me. VFW, Knights Of Columbus, YMCA, Elks Lodge. Places like these would rent their facilities obliviously to anyone with a few bucks. They never knew what they were getting into. And no place ever rented out to punks more than once, that's for sure. I think Scot Lade put on four or five rental hall shows between 1984 and 1986 and he lost his security deposit every time.

I recall a show Scot did at the Sons Of Italy Hall in Stuart, Florida. One kid brought in a bag of powdered doughnuts. Another kid brought in a bag of charcoal. When the dance floor was in high gear, they screamed, "Fucking anarchy!" and dumped their cargo on the floor. The feet of a hundred slam dancers ground the doughnuts and charcoal into a disgusting gray soot. Somebody from the hall saw it and freaked out. There was never another show there.

Anyhow, we pulled into the fire station parking lot and it was filled with freaks from all over the state of Florida. It still amazes me how far people used to travel for shows in those days. Not for some huge fest, either, but for a few small bands in a rec center. And it still amazes me that people from all over the state would even hear about these little gigs. This was before email, mind you. Promotion was all word of mouth and photocopied flyers.

A mini-village of punkers sat on the hoods of their cars and milled about the parking lot. Spiked, colored hair. Shaved heads. Leather jackets. Flannel shirts. White t-shirts with band logos scribbled on them with black magic marker. Bandanas. Spiked leather wristbands. High top sneakers and combat boots. The look of American punk, circa 1984, was completely the opposite of what the popular kids were wearing. That was the point. There was no shopping mall equivalent of punk at that point. No Hot Topic. No Green Day throwing mud on MTV. No MXPX in Pepsi commercials.

The show had not even started yet and there were already a few cops in the parking lot, keeping a contemptuous eye on us all.

"Why are there cops here?" I wondered. Cops showed up at almost every punk show in the 80s. It was unusual if the cops didn't show up. A show was deemed a success or a failure depending on how long the bands got to play before the show was broken up by the police.

The hardcore kids from my shop class were playing tug-o-war with an American flag. The cops didn't like that one bit. They marched over and started chewing out the kids about having respect for the flag and all of the stuff you'd expect from cops. The punk kids stood their ground and told the cops that they weren't breaking the law and that they were going to do whatever they wanted. For whatever reason, the cops shut the hell up and left. The cops left the show before it even started and never came back. All eight bands played and it was awesome.

I didn't know who any of the bands were before that night. I just went because it seemed like it was gonna be cool. The first band, No Policy, went on. It was all guys from my school, my age and a little older. They ripped. I thought, "Hey, I know those guys."

Then I thought, "Hey, I could do that, too." Months later, I was singing in my first band. Punk rock is easy, I learned. Anybody can do it. That's a big part of what initially appealed to me. Like folk music or the blues, just grab an instrument and go. No permission needed.

When Nat King Kong, a hilarious experimental noise band from Ft. Myers, played that night, they invited people to get on stage and jam with them. My friend Terry jumped up and grabbed the bass for a while and then passed it to me. I didn't know what the hell to do. I had never even held a guitar. I awkwardly hit a few notes and passed it to someone else. I was thrilled to get involved. When F played, the crowd went nuts. People knew the words to their songs. They unabashedly played a Cheap Trick song and an AC/DC song. I thought that was cool; we had the same roots. Jesus Fish Superbeer, the singer of

Nat King Kong, screamed, "F are god!" over and over. It was excellent. After the show, my friend Mike said, "I want to go buy a record from F." We just walked right up and talked to them, just like regular guys because they were regular guys, despite Jesus Fish Superbeer's assertions of godliness. No rockstar bullshit. These people were a little older than us, but pretty much our peers.

I asked them how they got a record out. I figured only bands like the Dead Kennedys and Black Flag could get records out. They laughed a little and told me that they just saved up their money and made a record, just like that. Wow.

We drove home and excitedly talked about the show. I think I was the most excited. The other guys had been to a few shows before and knew what to expect, but it was all new and wonderful to me. Mike let me borrow the F record, very nonchalantly.

"Just give it back whenever," he said, "but don't scratch it." I went into my room and listened to the record of the band I had just seen play two hours earlier. Man, that was it. That night I was hooked. Punk rock was the boss and everything else was just music. Suddenly, the Scorpions didn't quite cut it anymore. Still fun to listen to, but much less relevant.

A month or two later, another friend invited me to go see U2 at some big auditorium. At this point, U2 were just breaking out from the underground and getting a little radio play. A couple of years earlier, they were playing shows with the likes of Discharge in Europe. So, U2 was still kind of edgy, if you will excuse the pun. They had some political lyrics. Some likened them to the Clash. I liked their music, so I figured, yes, let's go.

The show was something like $17. Of course, nowadays, U2 tickets are like $100. Seventeen dollars seemed like a lot of money, but I paid it. I felt a little ripped off, as I had seen eight fantastic bands for three bucks not long ago. Our seats were way up in the nosebleed section. U2 looked like little action figures on the stage. Besides the singer, they barely moved. The music was good. They played well and played all of the songs I wanted to hear, but it just wasn't that exciting to be sitting in an auditorium seat, several hundred feet from the stage.

My friend had never been to any kind of concert before, so he had nothing to compare the experience to. And U2 was his favorite band. To him, the evening was a dream come true. Me, I was a little bored.

After the show, my friend was determined to meet the band, so we, and a couple hundred others, crowded near the stage exit. The upcoming rock gods walked by. People were screaming, like in that famous Beatles footage from the Ed Sullivan Show. U2 waved a little and smiled at us for about 25 seconds. One of them, maybe Bono, said something—who knows what—and the crowd shrieked in excitement. My friend tried to jump over the railing separating the band from the crowd. A huge security guy shoved him back and said something to him. It was a really lame scene. On the ride home, my friend went on and on about how great the show was and how cool U2 were. He was beaming. I didn't want to throw a wet blanket on his good mood, so I didn't tell him that I thought the whole thing was a little dull. But a couple of weeks later, I took him to a punk show—five small, local bands, playing off a gasoline-powered generator in the woods. That sort of concert was a totally foreign experience to him and still a fairly new experience for me. And on the way home from that show, he told me that it was even better than the U2 gig. "Extraordinary, how potent cheap music is." Yup!

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Went to Philly Fest. Totalitär ruled. So did World Burns to Death, Tragedy, Caustic Christ, From Ashes Rise, and a slew of others. I didn't sleep very much for four days straight, and now I'm sick, but I don't really care that much. Floyd called me on the phone this morning to let me know that my columns generally read like a big thanks list mixed with an enormous endnotes section, but what does he know? He spends his days dreaming of cake and sleeping on NOFX sweatshirts. So anyway, hats off to Tony, Greg, Sean, Felix and all the others for making my 29th birthday weekend one of the best I've ever had. It was a a total ripper, though perhaps 35 bands in four days was a bit excessive, don't ya think? Four days of too little sleep, sweating like a pig (though I was recently informed that sweating like a pig actually means you're not really sweating that much, 'cause pigs only sweat around their noses—who knew?) having bizarre conversations with people (about Christ only knows what), being overwhelmed by the sheer number of people that I see never see often enough, explaining one too many times why I don't like Flipper and why I think the Ramones are sorta overrated—it really wears a guy out.

"Events" like these are great, methinks, not for the fact of the sheer number of bands playing—'cause I bet everyone agrees that no one in their right mind (well, except for Floyd) would wanna see 35-plus bands in four days. What makes them great is the sheer massive number of punx that it brings together from across the planet. Truth be told, there were moments when the bands sorta got in the way. I mean, there I am, having a nice conversation about iced tea, why Ian from Crucial Unit's nut-hugger shorts with purple Civil Disobedience shirt were perhaps equal to a bullet belt/shorts combo in the fashion no-no department, when yet another band that I wanted to see started playing! Really, the nerve! Seriously, though it might seem as obvious as the letter "D" going along with the word "beat," it's the people and sense of collective alienation that keeps me motivated and driven. Without that, punk means nothing—sure loud music, dirty clothes, and funny haircuts are great and all—but without that sense of Us vs Them, what's the point?

So hugs not thugs to all the Austin punx, Pittsburgh punx, Philly punx, Jack's panty story, Randy for continuing to do *How Much Art Can You Take?* and for having a giant tattoo of the word "mutant" across his stomach, Christy my long lost third cousin, Stuart even though he was wearing a bullet belt and flip-flops, Dave Hyde for being a genius, the fucking weirdo who plays accordion and had a psycho cat whose room I slept in one night, Cuban coffee, Ian for wearing nut-hugger shorts, Decay (uh...Derek) for letting me escape from the psycho cat and the accordion and sleep on your floor, World Burns to Death for being the most intense band I've seen in eons, Timmy for being Timmy, Totalitär for risking the brutal Philly summer weather to play for us one (er...two) last time(s), Sarah'n Tristan for being the nicest Australians ever, Caustic Christ even though they covered Flipper, Crucial Unit even though their new album is a bit much, Matt Summers for giving me a Knife Fight, RAMBO even though they ripped off Randy's "Birds Of Punk" idea, Michelle who grinds scrotums, and all the other folx who made the weekend the best ever. Really. Now it's up to all of you to send me presents in order to help celebrate my 29th year of living—I'll be accepting them until December 31st, 2003. I especially am looking for copies of the DV8 EP, the Massacre 68 LP, plane tickets to NYC and/or Philly, and cases of Turkey Hill iced tea. Alright, my brain is mush, write me c/o *MRR* or via mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com and tell me how to keep the moisture gnats and daddy longlegs spiders that seem to really like my room at bay.

HOW TO CURE A BROKEN HEART*

Get a haircut.** Of course, the healing power is not in the haircut itself, but in the thrilling reminder that life is composed of infinite possibilities,

which makes you more beautiful just thinking about it. Seriously—have a close friend watch you carefully as you fantasize about becoming a merchant marine, or taking your band on a tour around the world, or dumping your controlling boyfriend. Your friend will confirm that in those moments, you actually became considerably more good-looking. Your new haircut embodies this, but will lose its potency after a couple of weeks. That doesn't mean your hair can't look OK for years, though, or at least until your next period of serious despondency.

I tend to get attached to a good, low-maintenance haircut and keep it for a long time. This is OK, since changing it too frequently will rob the new haircut of some of its transformative power. (Mohawks count for double—I mean *real* mohawks, not chickenshit faux-hawks, which is just normal hair temporarily convinced to stand upright, suitable only for poseurs.)

Sometimes, particularly when you've been wallowing in despair for so long that you can barely see your hand in front of your face, it's hard to see when you need a change. This is why you should always listen to your friends—at least the ones with good hair. For example, when Clara squinted at my hair and said, "Sucks. Too symmetrical," I didn't argue. I just went upstairs to get the scissors. Similarly, when I came home from out of town and saw the new bright orange, dark brown, and scarlet thing she had going on, I just shook my head. "Dark brown. Possibly black," I said. She dyed it two days later, over the protests of her other friends, who are well meaning but less worldly in this respect.

I now have the sideways, bleach-blonde haircut worn by your 8th grade crush. Jill, the one-who-got-me-into-punk, off of whose pleated plaid miniskirted ass the sun rose and set, had this very same hair in the 8th grade. It comes in handy when making eyes at the skate punks whose Tuesday route between BART stations I seem to have stumbled on. This week one of them was wearing a Faction shirt. I thought about walking up and casually saying, "hey, how about you and me go get Cokes?" Fortunately, I remembered that you shouldn't always do things just because you can.

2. The ultimate punk rock solution to heartbreak and despair is to be found in punk rock itself. Suicide and heroin are surer bets, but they're for suckers. To convince yourself of this, you should periodically make mix tapes. For yourself. After you've made the perfect tape, a tape on which *every single song* wrenches and pulls at your heart until you burst into tears in front of the cute boys on BART, you can and should make copies and distribute them to all your friends so they know exactly how miserable you are.

So what will you find on the perfect mix tape? Other columnists have their opinions about this. Allow me to weigh in. Different heartaches require different remedies, naturally. Every slight has its own flavor, every tragedy its many faces. Let me share the recipe I'm working on now.

First, you'll need a base. This should be one of those rare, brilliant bands that wrote songs that you can't imagine not existing. Discharge and the Ramones are obvious choices, but there are others. X works nicely, as does Hüsker Dü. Paul made a tape with the Smoking Popes as a base—pretty daring if you ask me, but it turned out well. Sprinkle a few songs throughout, to hold things together. The base will set the tone for your whole tape, so choose wisely.

You should add at least one song that says, punk rocker, I love you not only in *spite* of your utter worthlessness and stupid, juvenile haircut, but also actually *because* of them. "It's OK," by Dead Moon, "Fucked Up Kid," by Crimpshrine, and "Sunshine," by Screeching Weasel all work for this.

Songs which make reference to specific places, especially places where you grew up / fell in love, tend to be better than other songs. Songs with people's names in them also tend to be good. Exercise caution, however, as the pits of nostalgia are deep and inadequately lit.

Speaking of specifics—about relationships, some songs just say it so well. Is alcohol poisoning your relationship instead of preserving it? Turn to Dr. Frank: "Seeing double feeling single, weighing benefits and costs / Double single single double double single double-crossed." ("Swallow Everything"). And here's Bitchin', about the agonizing heartbreak itself: "I did my best. I waited, I was faithful. I loved, I lost. I yearned to be irreplaceable" ("So Much Water So Close to Home").

You'll need, at this point, a hopeful song; a song that captures the simple bliss of being alive and still, even, relatively young. "All Kindsa Girls" by the Real Kids is a triumphant rebound song, communicating something like, "Holy shit, look at all these other people in the world who might want to fuck me!" Songs from '78 or so are definitely recommended for this category. Yeah, the Ramones work, but try to use a little imagination. Try "This is Rock 'n' Roll" by the Kids, "Do Anything You Wanna Do," by Eddie & the Hot Rods, or "No," by the Rezillos. Anything by the Rezillos will do, except "It Gets Me," which is actually really sad.

If Universal Order of Armageddon is the logical consequence of Rites of Spring, then Born Against is the inevitable result of Reagan Youth. "Half Mast," ("As long as you can…Sleep well…Under the iron…Iron fist…!") "Entire Vast Situation," "USA," and "Persistent Vision," distributed evenly throughout a mix tape (or hell, even back to back) will bring your tape, and your poor damaged heart, to a precious equilibrium of light and dark, anger and despair, etc., etc.

Even when I'm not using Hüsker Dü as a base coat, at least a song or two inevitably shows up on every tape. This time it's "The Girl Who Lives on Heaven Hill," and "Everything Falls Apart." Last time, on the tape that Travis christened "What's So Funny About Mid-tempo?" it was "Green Eyes." Go with it.

You'll need some fast, angry, innovative hardcore to keep the fires of resistance burning. That new Tragatelo record is brilliant through and through, with such simple, provocative leads! Burning Kitchen. Anti-Cimex. Copout. Heroin. Nausea, even? For sheer intensity, the dark tunefulness of From Ashes Rise or Tragedy, or the spine-tingling, moody build-ups of say, Poland's Post Regiment or Italy's Contropotere.

If it's your first time making a tape like this, it's excusable to put on a few over-the-top emotionally manipulative songs, like Patti Smith's "Free Money" or god forbid, the Modern Lovers' "Hospital," but the sooner you get past this stage, the better. Paul made interesting use of the Jim Carroll Band's "People Who Died," on a recent tape. Though normally I would say this is a once or twice a year listen, it's a great song, if only because it contains the best rhyme ever of a word with itself: "Bikers" and "Bikers." Go Jim!

Other possible ingredients: Thatcher on Acid, "Round and Round." Such sad chords they have. What was their song with the line "I might as well be dead…You said it"? The timelessly melodic stuff: Naked Raygun, Leatherface, Pegboy, Radon, etc. Sheephead. Chickenhead. Soup. The Big Boys will fit any category you like. Propagandhi, "Anchorless." Rondelles, "Rediscover Fire," from their great second record. Los Canadians. This is My Fist. Nip Drivers. Zero Boys. Plugz. The fucking Saints. The fucking Avengers. The fucking Heartbreakers. The fucking Adverts, Wipers, fucking Dils.

If you're the kind of person who likes it all spelled out for you, you can, under extreme circumstances, include a song by one of those post-emo posi-breakdown-anthem bands, like Kid Dynamite or something. Or even Against Me. But all those handclaps? It's cheating.

In any case, don't worry. Listen to your new tape instead. It'll all work out in the end. Or not. But at least we're in it together. I won't give up if you don't. Don't give up!

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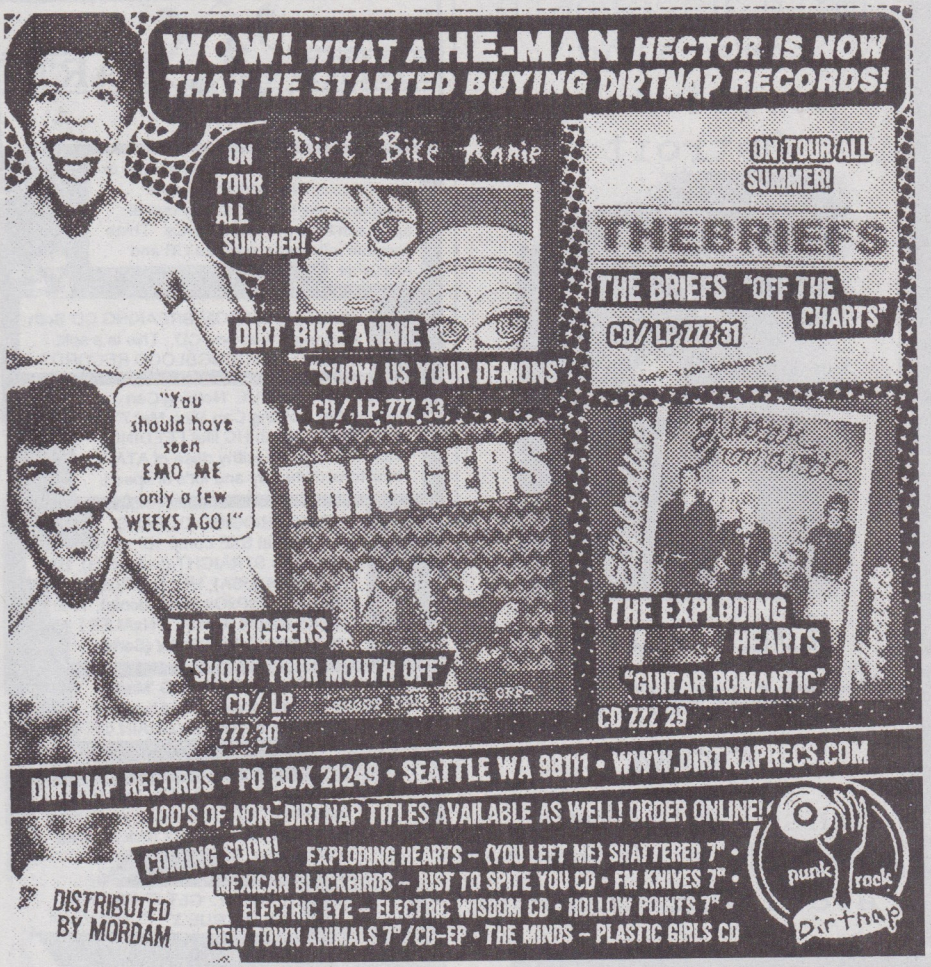
PS. Thanks so much to Sara, Tristan, and Paco for all their help rearranging our offices and making salad! Also to Martin Sprouse, Rick, Clayton, Brad & Billy, Josh Stein, Kat, and Paul Curran!

* I stole this title from Cynthia Heimel, who laid it all out in her book *Sex Tips for Girls* in 1983. She was one of those racy proto-punk types who haunted nightclubs in New York City in the late 70s and early 80s, hanging out with Cookie Mueller and having love affairs with Lester Bangs, and if that's not a recipe for pathos, I don't know what is. Her advice is more useful than mine, with sections like, "Rave, Moan, Scream, Wail, and Sob," "Shamelessly Rely on Your Best Friend," and "Do Not Call Him, Do Not Try to See Him, Never Fuck Him." Cynthia lives in the East Bay now (which is pretty weird) and has four dogs and a new book out.

** OK, so Cynthia Heimel came up with this line too, but it bears repeating.



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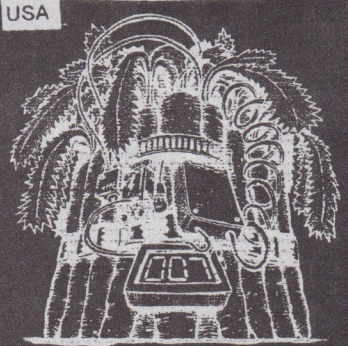

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Arwen Curry

AUGUST MARKS ANOTHER ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATOMIC BOMBING OF JAPAN, THE ULTIMATE ACT OF TERRORISM

In Which 231,920 People Have Now Died, the Latest, the Children of 1945, From a Plague of Cancers

Published by John Pilger

I first visited Hiroshima 22 years after the atomic bombing. Although the city had been completely rebuilt with glass boxes and ring roads, its suffering was not difficult to find. Beside the river, less than a mile from where the bomb burst, stilts of shacks rose from the silt, and languid human silhouettes searched pyramids of rubbish, providing a glimpse of a Japan few can now imagine.

They were the survivors. Most of them were sick, impoverished, unemployed and socially excluded. Such was the fear of the "atomic plague" that people changed their names; most moved away. The sick received treatment in a crowded state-run hospital. The modern Atomic Bomb Hospital, surrounded by pines and overlooking the city, which the Americans built and ran, took only a few patients for "study".

On 6 August, the anniversary of the bombing, the Mainichi Shimbun reported that the number of people killed directly and after exposure to radiation had now reached 231,920. Today, in the same hospital wards I visited, there are the children of 1945, dying from a predictable plague of cancers.

The first Allied journalist to reach Hiroshima following the bombing was Wilfred Burchett, the Australian war correspondent of the *London Daily Express*. Burchett found thousands of survivors suffering mysterious symptoms of internal hemorrhage, spotted skin and hair loss. In a historic despatch to the *Express* that began, "I write this as a warning to the world", he described the effects of radiation.

The Allied occupation authorities vehemently denied Burchett's reports. People had died only as a result of the blast, they lied, and the "embedded" Allied press amplified this. "No radioactivity in Hiroshima ruin" was the headline in the *New York Times* of 13 September 1945. Burchett had his press accreditation withdrawn and was issued with an expulsion order from Japan, which was later rescinded. Japanese film shot in the hospitals was confiscated and sent to Washington, where it was classified as top secret and not released for 23 years.

The true motive for using this ultimate weapon of mass destruction was suppressed even longer. The official truth was that the bomb was dropped to speed the surrender of Japan and save Allied lives. Today, as the public becomes more attuned to the scale of government deception, this was probably the biggest lie of all. As the historian Gar Alperovitz, among others, has documented, US political and military leaders, knowing that Japan's surrender was already under way, believed the atomic bombing was militarily unnecessary. In 1946 the US Strategic Bombing Survey confirmed this. None of this was shared with the public, nor the belief in Washington that the atomic bomb "experiment" in Japan, as President Truman put it, would demonstrate US primacy to the Russians.

Since then declassified files have shown that the United States has almost used nuclear weapons on at least three occasions: twice in the 1950s, during the Korean war and in Indo-China (against Ho Chi Minh's forces, which were then routing the French), and during the 1973 Arab/Israeli war. During the 1980s, President Reagan threatened the use of "limited" nuclear weapons, until huge demonstrations in Europe curtailed the American short-range missile program. Under George W Bush's essentially Reaganite administration, the US (and British) military's love affair with nuclear weapons is on the rise again. In 2001, the United States withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the landmark agreement with the Russians signed in 1972. This was the first time in the nuclear era that Washington had renounced a major arms control accord.

The most important official behind this is John Bolton, the under-secretary of state for arms control and international security: an ironic title, surely, given the extraordinary stand Bolton has taken and the threats he has made. A former Reagan man who is probably the most extreme of George W Bush's "neo-cons", Bolton had his appointment endorsed by Senator Jesse Helms, one of America's greatest warmongers, with these words: "John Bolton is the kind of man with whom I would want to stand at Armageddon...for the final battle between good and evil."

Bolton is Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's man at the "liberal" State Department. He is a strong advocate of the blurring of the distinction between nuclear and conventional weapons. This is described vividly in last year's leaked Nuclear Posture Review, in which the Pentagon expresses its "need" for low-yield nuclear weapons for possible attacks on a shopping list of "enemies of the United States": Libya, Syria, Iran, Iraq and North Korea. The inclusion of Iraq is significant. During the long charade about Saddam Hussein's elusive weapons of mass destruction, no mention was made in Washington of US willingness to use nuclear weapons against Iraq. It was left to Britain's Defense Secretary, the caustic Geoff Hoon, to disclose this. On 26 March 2002, Hoon told parliament that "some states" — he mentioned Saddam Hussein by name — "can be absolutely confident that in the right conditions we would be willing to use our nuclear weapons". No British minister has ever made such an outright threat. As Hoon himself later admitted, British policy is merely an extension of US policy.

As for John Bolton, there is little doubt that he has been assigned to lead the charge against North Korea, which has nuclear weapons. Bolton has been traveling the world trying to assemble a "coalition" that will send warships to "interdict" North Korean vessels. Two weeks ago he was in Seoul, where he unleashed a remarkable stream of abuse against the North Korean dictator Kim Jong-il who, he said, ran "a hellish nightmare". (In reply, Pyongyang described Bolton as "human scum".)

Last month I interviewed Bolton in Washington and asked him: "If you stop ships, isn't there an echo of what happened in 1962, with the threat of nuclear war? Won't the North Korean regime be moved to defend themselves with the nuclear weapons they have?" He replied that a North Korean ship had already been stopped and "the regime did nothing in response".

"But if you take action, the nuclear risk is there, isn't it?" I asked. He replied, "The risk is there if we don't take action... of them blackmailing other countries." He quoted Condoleezza Rice, Bush's closest adviser: "We don't want to wait for the mushroom cloud."

Two weeks ago, on the 58th anniversary of Hiroshima's incineration, a secret conference was held at the Strategic Air Command in Omaha, Nebraska, the base where, 24 hours a day, the United States keeps its "nuclear vigil". (It was the setting for Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove*.) In attendance were cabinet members, generals and leading scientists from America's three main nuclear weapons laboratories. Members of Congress were banned, even as observers. The agenda was the development of "mini-nukes" for possible use against "rogue states".

The mantle of the greatest rogue state of all cannot be in doubt. Since the end of the cold war, the United States has repudiated, rejected, or subverted all the major treaties designed to prevent war with weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. This is the rampant power to which, says Hoon, we are inexorably tied.

That, not an establishment brawl between the government and the BBC, ought to be our most urgent concern.

HEAD OF MEXICO RIGHTS OFFICE FEARS ITS CLOSING MAY BLOCK REFORM

by Ginger Thompson
Excerpted from the New York Times

The unceremonious closing of Mexico's high-level human rights office has sounded alarms with human rights and political groups who are taking the move as an sign that President Vincente Fox has begun to back off from his pledge pursue bold democratic reforms.

In a terse two-sentence statement last week, Foreign Minister Luis Ernesto Derbez announced that the government had closed the office of the under secretary for human rights and would fold the duties of the office within the ministry on Sept. 1.

The statement made no mention of the fate of Mariclaire Acosta, who had been appointed as under secretary for human rights by Mr. Fox and whose 30 years as an independent advocate had made her a symbol of the Mexican human rights movement. Her dismissal coincided with a global meeting in Mexico by more than 500 representatives of Amnesty International and the release of two critical reports by prominent international human rights organizations.

In an interview today, Ms. Acosta charged that Mr. Derbez was not interested in human rights issues, much less committed to the agenda that she had set. She said she had often found herself alone when demanding that the military reopen investigations into past abuses, or in support of inquiries by the United Nations or the Inter American Commission for Human Rights.

"I see this as a sign that the more progressive elements of the Fox government have been pushed aside," she said. "The failure of the human rights agenda is part of the failure of this government to live up to its promises for real reforms."

NO MERCY IN ASHCROFT'S BRAND OF JUSTICE

by Helen Thomas
Published by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Attorney General John Ashcroft doesn't have enough to do, hunting down terrorists.

With the help of a rollover Congress, he now has a new and bigger club to go after federal judges who impose lighter sentences in criminal cases than he would like.

As a faithful lord high executioner of the administration's much touted "compassionate conservatism," Ashcroft wants to clamp down on those judges.

At issue are the sentencing guidelines laid down by a federal commission that Congress created in 1984. Under pressure from Ashcroft, Congress voted in April to restrict the flexibility of federal judges to depart from the guidelines. The new law also makes it easier for prosecutors to appeal more cases when they don't like the court-imposed prison sentences.

As it stands now, the attorney general must report within 15 days to Congress the identity of any federal judge who deviates from the rules and the reasons why. And the department must report within five days whether it intends to appeal.

The empowered attorney general then issued an order on July 28 to federal prosecutors, directing them to report all "downward departure" sentencing decisions in criminal cases.

Previously, the prosecutors were required to report to the Justice Department only those sentences that they had objected to and wanted to appeal.

The overall effect is to give Ashcroft more control and the final say on whether to appeal a sentence. And it reduces the powers of the prosecutors in the field, the people who know more about the defendant and the circumstances of the case than does anyone in Washington.

It looks to me as if Ashcroft has designed a new program to intimidate federal judges.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., accused Ashcroft of an "ongoing attack on judicial independence" and said he was requiring federal prosecutors to establish a "black list" of judges who diverge from the guidelines.

Department lawyers say the new rules are in the interest of uniformity. But Ashcroft obviously was miffed that some judges weren't handing out the tough sentences that he wanted.

The sentencing commission has statistics showing that 35 percent of the sentences handed down in federal court in the 2001 fiscal year fell below the guidelines. Many of those sentences were the results of plea-bargaining and had the approval of the prosecutors.

Jonathan Turley, a George Washington University law professor, said many judges have denounced the guidelines for producing "unduly long sentences" and hampering the courts' ability to fashion punishments to fit the crimes.

Ashcroft wants judges to treat defendants as "statistics rather than individuals," Turley added. In all fairness, Congress shares the blame for giving him even more power to do so.

In his new order to the prosecutors, Ashcroft cited a May 5 speech by Chief Justice William Rehnquist who acknowledged that it was up to Congress to establish guidelines on sentencing policies.

But Ashcroft conveniently failed to mention that Rehnquist also used the same speech to criticize the sentencing restrictions as "an unwarranted and ill-considered effort to intimidate individual judges in the performance of their official duties."

Rehnquist also complained to Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., the top Democrat on the Senate Judiciary Committee, that limiting judicial discretion "would seriously impair the ability of courts to impose just and reasonable sentences."

In a recent speech to the ABA convention in San Francisco, Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, a moderate conservative, criticized mandatory minimum sentencing and said prison terms were too long. He told the lawyers "our resources are misspent, our punishments too severe, our sentences too long."

He branded the guidelines as "not wise, not just."

An even more dramatic protest against the guidelines came from U.S. District Judge John Martin. He quit the bench in Manhattan in June and charged that Congress was attempting "to intimidate judges."

U.S. District Judge Irene Keeley of Clarksburg, W.Va., who heads the ABA's National Conference of Federal Judges, supports the critics of the guidelines.

She said the jurists would continue to "evaluate each sentence on a case-by-case basis." A study of the facts will show there is no evidence that judges have been bending the sentencing rules, she said.

Obviously Ashcroft's sense of justice is not the kind that is touched by the quality of mercy.

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THUNDER OF '68 RUMBLES ONWARD

Soviet Invasion of Czechoslovakia Bears a Warning: Superpowers That Turn Bully Risk Self-destruction.

by Mark Kurlansky

Thirty-five years ago, on Aug. 20, 1968, Anton Tazky — a secretary of the Slovak Party Central Committee and a personal friend of Czechoslovakian Communist Party chief Alexander Dubcek — was driving back to Bratislava from an outlying district. He noticed odd, bright lights in the distance, and as he drove closer, he realized he had been seeing the headlights of tanks and military trucks with soldiers in foreign uniforms at the wheels. A movie shoot, Tazky decided. He went to bed as his country was being invaded, courtesy of Leonid Brezhnev and the Soviet Union.

It was the midpoint of a year unparalleled for wars, uprisings, revolutions and upheavals. And yet, with hindsight, it's clear that no single event of that eventful year had a greater effect — or holds a stronger message for us today — than the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet Union's last leader, recently said the 1968 invasion "had an effect on all domestic and foreign policy and the entire development of Soviet society, which entered a stage of profound stagnation."

It took only a day of world outrage for Brezhnev to realize he had made a terrible blunder, and he tried to backtrack. What he couldn't know was that it was the first crack in the post-World War II geopolitical structure; the Cold War, which was at the root of so much unrest in 1968, had begun to disintegrate.

Dubcek had come to power in Prague the first week of 1968 in a shakeup that ousted the most repressive government in the Soviet bloc. "We couldn't change the people," Dubcek said wryly, "so we changed the leaders."

Suddenly, Czechoslovakians were free to travel, their press was free to report on what it wanted in the way it wanted and their labor unions and agricultural associations were free to criticize government policy. What they had in mind was the creation of a Communist democracy, Marx's ideal made real. It came to be called the Prague Spring.

By summer, activists and hippies from Amsterdam to Berkeley packed the city to test Dubcek's experiment. It was difficult to find a hotel vacancy or even a table at one of Prague's few restaurants.

On Aug. 12, a *New York Times* reporter wrote: "For those under 30, Prague seems the right place to be this summer." But at 11 p.m. Central European time on Aug. 20, the earth rumbled and 4,600 tanks and 165,000 Warsaw Pact soldiers crossed the Czech border at 20 locations, rolling west from the Soviet Union, east from East Germany, south from Poland and north from Hungary into the undefended nation. Militarily, it was magnificent, except that no army fought back. It was the largest airlift ever carried out by the Soviet military outside its borders. In seven hours, 250 aircraft delivered an entire airborne division, including small armored vehicles, fuel and supplies.

Party chief Brezhnev and Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin had planned the invasion for more than a month, but they decided Czechoslovakia's fate just days before the invasion was launched. They believed that the Czechoslovakian Presidium, once its members saw the tanks coming, would oust Dubcek and his team and bring the country back into line. The official East German newspaper, Neues Deutschland, ran ahead of the news on the night of the invasion with a story about an uprising and a new revolutionary government that had asked for Soviet military support. But no new government was formed and there was no one asking for Soviet intervention.

When word of the invasion reached Dubcek, he was meeting with the Presidium. "I had no suspicion, not even the slightest hint that such a step could be taken against us," he said softly. Tears slid down his cheeks, recalled one Czech official who was there. "I have devoted my entire life to cooperation with the Soviet Union and they have done this to me. It is my personal tragedy."

Dubcek, whose father had been jailed in the U.S. as a World War I pacifist, ordered that there be no armed resistance. Still, young Czechoslovakians threw burning rags at the tanks, blocked them with their bodies and pleaded with confused Russian soldiers to lay down their arms and join the Czech experiment.

By the end of the first day, 23 Czechoslovakian civilians were dead, including one shot by Soviets while Dubcek watched from a window. The sight of unarmed students facing Soviet tanks had been filmed by Czech television, smuggled out and broadcast worldwide.

The invasion was widely condemned. There were even protests, quickly suppressed, in Moscow's Red Square. Of the 88 Communist parties in the world, only 10, including the five Warsaw Pact invaders, voiced approval. Brezhnev, who had thrown Dubcek and the rest of the Czech government into prison, quickly brought the officials to Moscow for negotiations.

When the Soviet Union finally came apart more than 20 years later, Western observers were shocked. They had already forgotten 1968. But at the time of the invasion even *Time* magazine predicted its fall: It was the end of heroic Russia. A country widely admired because it had dared to stand alone and build a socialist society, because it protected other socialist countries, because its citizens had been sacrificed by the millions to rid Europe of fascism had become, simply, a bully that crushed small countries.

A superpower that no longer stands for anything, that no one believes in anymore, that is seen only as a bully, will fall despite its military might. If the Bush administration ever wanted to reflect on history, it might think about this.

Mark Kurlansky's latest book, "1968: The Year that Rocked the World," will be published by Ballantine Books in January 2004.

WITH SCIENCE, BUSHIES PLAY FAST AND LOOSE

by Tom Teepen
Published by the Boulder Daily Camera

A report prepared for Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., catches the Bush administration red-handed distorting and suppressing politically awkward scientific findings and boosting ideology-driven panaceas that ignore overwhelming contrary research. This is political correctness of an extraordinarily reckless sort.

The report was prepared by the Democratic staff of the House Committee on Government Reform. Forget its partisan origins. This is a picture that should disturb Republicans perhaps most of all. What is the future of a governing party that founds its policies on loopy pseudo-science?

The classic case: Soviet agriculture was undermined for years by Stalin's sponsorship of goofball biologist T.D. Lysenko, whose wrongheaded theories, especially in genetics, were embraced as serving Marxist orthodoxy. A whole generation of Russian biology was lost to his wild goose chases.

To promote drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Interior Secretary Gale Norton told Congress that most caribou calve outside the target area when her agency's own scientists reported just the opposite.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture now requires its scientists to get special permission to speak out about "agricultural practices with negative health and environmental consequences." That's specifically so in matters of water contamination, hazardous materials and animal feeding and other operations that harm soil, water or air quality.

And, sure enough, research about industrial hog farms that might have sparked calls for regulation has been suppressed by the administration.

The National Cancer Institute was pressured to scrap a finding, supported by extensive research, that abortion does not cause breast cancer. At the behest of anti-abortion groups, a claim that the question is up in the air was substituted.

Information about serious environmental problems was edited out of a report on Yellowstone Park, and the Corps of Engineers reversed itself under political pressure and killed its proposed protections for wetlands, a change pushed by home-builders.

Independent medical and scientific authorities have been removed from key federal advisory groups in favor of industry lobbyists, other interested parties and career contrarians — for instance, the advisory committee of the National Center for Environmental Health and the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods.

The Department of Health and Human Services replaced scientists on a lead-poisoning panel with industry consultants and scrapped recent research. And HHS put a conservative religious activist against the abortion drug RU-486, with little else to recommend him, on a reproductive health panel.

Notoriously, there's global warming, still denied by the administration despite the overwhelming concurrence of international scientific opinion and even, oops, of a study panel appointed by the administration itself.

And the administration has forced the Centers for Disease Control to back away from broad-based sex education, which research has found to be effective, in favor of abstinence-only programs that research has not found to be effective. Sex education, under new Bush guidelines, is evaluated not by the resulting sexual practices of participants but by their subsequent sexual beliefs, and condoms are scorned, dismissed for disease prevention and contraception even though the data are compelling that they are useful for both.

There is more than one way for a president to lie about sex. This one is actually dangerous.

Tom Teepen is a columnist for Cox Newspapers.

POISONED CHALICE - WHEREVER IT IS PRESCRIBED, A DOSE OF IMF MEDICINE ONLY COMPOUNDS ECONOMIC CRISIS

by George Monbiot
Published by the Guardian / UK

For how much longer should we give those who run the global economy the benefit of the doubt? The International Monetary Fund has made the same "mistake" so many times that only one explanation appears to remain: it is engineering disaster.

The crises over which it has presided in Thailand, South Korea, Russia and Argentina are well-documented by Joseph Stiglitz, the former chief economist of the World Bank, among others. But we have, until now, lacked a comprehensive description of the way it worked in eastern Europe. A new book by the economist Pongrac Nagy* shows for the first time how the IMF smashed Hungary.

Communist economic management was hopeless: coercive, unaccountable, incompetent and wasteful. So when Hungary began to democratise in the late 1980s, it was plain that a new economic system was required. There were a number of options for transition. But before anyone had considered them, Hungary's naive and trusting new government was persuaded by the western powers that it had no alternative but to turn to the IMF.

Unless a country's economic policy is approved by the IMF, it cannot obtain foreign capital. Post-communist Hungary needed foreign capital for just one purpose: to help repay its enormous external debt. It could have applied, as many other countries had done, for debt relief, but the IMF, in the face of substantial evidence, told it that this would deter foreign investors. The only option was to implement the policies the IMF recommended.

It has just one set of policies. Governments must impose restraints upon the supply of money and credit, open the door to foreign capital, privatise state assets and cut public spending. It justifies these demands by persuading them that they are suffering from unmanageable debt and galloping inflation.

So in 1990 the IMF told Hungary that it was undergoing an inflationary crisis. Prices, it pointed out, had risen by 17% in 1989. In truth this rise was caused not by inflation (demand outstripping supply), but mainly by policy changes, such as the introduction of VAT and the abolition of subsidies. The IMF insisted on pretending that it was caused by excess demand.

The best way of reducing demand, the IMF maintained, was to restrict the amount of money the banks could lend. So between 1990 and 1996, the central bank ensured that the credit made available to businesses halved. The immediate and predictable result was that interest rates soared (to 50%) and businesses all over Hungary collapsed. As workers were sacked and wages were cut, consumer demand crashed. The IMF, Nagy writes, had "artificially plunged the Hungarian economy into its greatest-ever depression in peacetime". Between 1990 and 1993, Hungary's gross domestic product fell by 18%.

Far from curing inflation, this treatment caused it. Between 1993 and 1996, prices rose by 130%. This was not because demand was rising, but simply because it wasn't falling as fast as supply. But the IMF, once more, treated this new problem as if it was caused by runaway demand. It insisted on further economic restriction, which, predictably enough, pushed Hungary further into depression.

To ensure that Hungary serviced its debt, the IMF demanded that it cut every possible public service, and privatise every possible state asset. Entire economic sectors were flogged swiftly and cheaply, with the result that foreign corporations acquired complete market control. To ensure, in the government's words, "the desirable reallocation of income - towards the business sector", Hungary was then obliged to introduce one of the most regressive tax policies in the world: 43% of government revenue came from taxes on consumption, but just 20% from income tax and 14% from business taxes.

All this was carried out, as all IMF programmes are, in conditions of total secrecy and institutional deceit. The lie the IMF tells is that it simply approves the "letter of intent" written by a government, in which the new economic policies are contained. This story relieves it of all responsibility for what happens. But the letter of intent is actually written by the IMF, and simply signed by the government. It is massive and detailed, and guides the economic and political life of the nation for between one and three years. It is entirely confidential. The only sight the people of Hungary have ever received of IMF policy was a leaked letter from a senior IMF official to the finance minister. His demands precisely matched the policies the government was implementing.

One-and-a-half million people (almost 30% of the workforce) lost their jobs. The incomes of those who stayed in work declined by 24%; pensions fell by 31%. By 1996, most people were living on or around subsistence levels. Public services shrivelled. Between 1989 and 1998, the crime rate rose by 166%. This, we must remember, was the result of a process almost universally described as "the triumph of capitalism".

Then, in 1996, suddenly, without announcement or explanation, the policy changed. The banks were permitted to start issuing credit again and the recession, as a result, came to an immediate end. Over the next four years, industrial production climbed by 45% and gross domestic product by 21%. Wages and pensions began to rise again.

The experiment, in other words, could not have had a clearer outcome. You apply the IMF's medicine and the economy collapses. You stop, and the economy recovers. It has been repeated often enough for us to trust the results. In Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia, Russia and Argentina, the IMF's financial liberalisation and forced restrictions led to economic crisis, which was relieved only as those restrictions were lifted. Those nations which refused to take the medicine, even though they were confronting almost identical conditions (Malaysia, China, Poland) prospered while their neighbours collapsed.

So why, knowing what the results will be, does the IMF keep applying the same formula for disaster? It can hardly be through lack of expertise. The truth is that the results happen to suit its sponsors very well. While the IMF works mainly in poor nations, it is controlled, through its one-dollar, one-vote system, entirely by the rich. As a result, as Stiglitz says, its programmes reflect "the interests and ideology of the western financial community".

Desmond Tutu once remarked that: "When the missionaries came to Africa, they had the Bible and we had the land. They said 'let us close our eyes and pray'. When we opened them, we had the Bible, and they had the land." The Hungarians were handed the Bible of economic orthodoxy by its missionaries. Through deceit and secrecy, the IMF ensured that their eyes were shut. By the time they opened them, foreign banks and corporations owned the economy; the public sector was giving way to foreign capital; structural unemployment had produced a pliant and desperate workforce. The IMF, in other words, had engineered the theft of an entire nation. How many more times does this need to happen before we can see what the game is?

* From Command to Market Economy in Hungary under the Guidance of the IMF, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest.

STAKES ARE HIGH IN IMF-ARGENTINA NEGOTIATIONS

by Mark Weisbrot

There is an old adage about borrowing: if you owe the bank $50,000 and can't pay it, you have a problem; but if you owe the bank $50 million, then the bank has a problem. This may well describe the situation facing Argentina and the IMF, as they try to conclude negotiations for a new agreement this month.

The pressure on both sides will be intense, and the outcome could have a serious impact on future economic policy in Latin America and developing countries generally. Argentina owes $14.3 billion to the IMF, $8.5 billion to the World Bank, and $8 billion to the Inter-American Development Bank—respectively, about 14, 8, and 20 percent of these institutions' portfolios. If Argentina defaults to them, it could jeopardize their AAA credit rating. In other words, the banks have a problem.

Aside from the risk of a lower credit rating, which is probably remote for the IMF, these lenders could lose enormous political power in the case of a default. The big three generally negotiate as a block, and with the IMF as leader. This gives them a creditors' cartel which is very powerful and allows them to impose a whole set of economic conditions on borrowing governments—often harmful and sometimes disastrous, as in the case of Argentina in recent years.

These official or "preferred creditors" have a trump card that private lenders don't have: if a country defaults to the IMF or World Bank, they can be cut off from all kinds of credit, even the export credits necessary to carry on day-to-day international trade. That is why very few countries have ever defaulted to these institutions, and those that have done so have generally been "failed" or "pariah" states such as Iraq, Congo, or Afghanistan. And that is why Argentina has been careful so far to make its payments to the IMF and World Bank, even while presiding over the largest sovereign debt default in history.

But if Argentine President Kirchner calls the IMF's bluff this time, it's not clear that—as a political matter—the Fund would be able to inflict more punishment than it has already meted out to Argentina. Unlike Brazil, whose economy is currently sagging under the weight of an IMF- sponsored austerity plan, Argentines have already suffered through the depths of a crushing economic collapse. The depression pushed more than half the population below the official poverty line, and a fifth of the labor force into unemployment.

Most of Argentina (and the world) knows quite well that the IMF played a major role in bringing about this disaster, and in making it worse by advocating high interest rates and government budget cuts (the opposite of what our own government has done since our economy slipped into recession in 2001). So Kirchner should have a lot of public support for refusing any agreement that imposes further suffering or threatens to abort the economy's nascent recovery.

"Argentina has already proven that it can live without an IMF agreement," said Kirchner, and he is right. The IMF gave the country nothing but grief from August 2001 to January 2003, and then signed an agreement that only allowed Argentina to maintain its payments to official creditors—in other words, no new resources. But the country is running a large trade surplus and therefore doesn't necessarily need financial resources from abroad. The economy grew by 5.4 percent for the year ending with the first quarter of 2003.

The current agreement expires at the end of this month, and Argentina owes more than $6 billion to the official creditors by the end of the year. The Fund could use the threat of default on these payments to force an unsustainable settlement on the $76 billion of defaulted debt owed to private creditors.

This would be especially dangerous. If Argentina agrees to pay too much of the defaulted debt, it could be condemned to an indefinite period of austerity and stagnation—limping along from one crisis to the next, while bondholders fret whether the government can continuously punish its citizens enough to extract increasing government budget surpluses.

Meanwhile, the Fund has had the bad taste to insist on punishing price increases for the privatized, foreign-owned utility companies, and foreclosures on homes bought by ordinary citizens who were bankrupted when the IMF-sponsored exchange rate regime collapsed. Let's hope that the Argentine government can hold its ground—it certainly has a mandate to do so.

Mark Weisbrot is co-Director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, in Washington, DC.

US ESCALATES GM FOOD ROW WITH EUROPE

by Andrew Osborn
Published by the Guardian / UK

Europe's dispute with America over genetically modified food escalated yesterday after Washington asked the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to force the EU to lift its five-year-old ban on new GM food products.

In a move which raises the prospect of a fresh trade war just a month before crucial world trade talks in Mexico, America requested the formation of a WTO dispute settlement panel to decide once and for all who is right on GM technology. The call was backed by Argentina and Canada.

Washington said it hoped that the panel — which could take up to 18 months to pronounce — would rule that the EU's failure to allow the sale of 30 US biotech products on precautionary grounds was illegal.

The EU response was immediate and curt. It said it regretted the move, blocked the formation of the panel (something it is allowed to do only once), and claimed that the case would confuse already sceptical European consumers.

"We regret this move to an unnecessary litigation," said Pascal Lamy, EU trade commissioner.

"The EU's regulatory system for GMOs [genetically modified organisms] is clear, transparent, reasonable and non-discriminatory. We are confident that the WTO will confirm that the EU fully respects its obligations."

EU environment commissioner Margot Wallstrom warned that the US move could backfire.

"There should be no doubt that it is not our intention to create trade barriers. But my concern is that this request will muddy the waters of the debate in Europe. We have to create confidence among citizens for GMOs and then allow them to choose."

A de facto EU moratorium on all new GM product approvals has been in place since 1998 because of widespread public unease about the technology.

The EU has recently finalised strict new rules on the authorisation and labelling of such products which it argues means that the moratorium is now dead in the water and that new GM products can be approved.

However, most EU member states are still dragging their feet over letting in new products and Washington is growing impatient.

If it wins the WTO case the EU could be forced to authorise the sale and marketing of the 30 biotech products in question and might have to compensate US farmers for their losses.

Those are estimated at nearly $300m (£189m) a year in lost corn exports alone.

Linnet Deily, the US WTO envoy, said yesterday that the EU's restrictive GM policy was unfair to other countries and held back a technology that holds "great promise for raising farmer productivity, reducing hunger and improving health in the developing world, and improving the environment".

However anti-GM campaigners said the US was trying to force unwanted food on Europe.

"The US administration, funded by the likes of GMO giant Monsanto, is using the undemocratic and secretive WTO to force feed the world GM foods," said Martin Rocholl, of Friends of the Earth Europe.

"Decisions about the food we eat should be made in Europe and not in the White House, the WTO or Monsanto's HQ.

"We welcome the European commission's commitment to fight this aggressive US policy."

The EU argued yesterday that even the American public wanted GM food labelled, saying that a recent poll found "a whopping 92% of Americans" favor biotech crop labelling.

GM food is just one of several issues where the EU and the US are at loggerheads.

Disagreements over steel tariffs, US tax breaks for multinationals, and the US practice of feeding cattle growth hormones continue to sour the transatlantic relationship.

STOP THE WALL 'SNAKING THROUGH THE WEST BANK'

by Jamal Juma'

Palestinians have been watching with despair the visits of Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to Washington. Amid the rhetoric of negotiations, more than 100 bulldozers are working every day to continue construction of the wall, highlighting the actual path that the road map is paving.

While President Bush was correct in calling the wall "a problem" and referring to it as "a wall snaking through the West Bank," on the ground there is no sign of an end to what has been called the largest "project" ever undertaken by Israel.

In this context, the negotiation process seems void of any meaning, or a smoke screen for what is being implemented on the ground.

Current projections suggest that the wall, with an expected length of 400 miles, will solidify Israeli control of almost one-half of the West Bank. The wall is already snaking its way up to four miles inside the West Bank, and in some areas may cut 10 miles into the West Bank. It consistently follows a path that ensures maximum settlement annexation and large-scale control of Palestinian lands.

The wall (misleadingly referred to as the "security fence") takes on a number of horrific constructs. In some areas, it consists of a 25-foot-high concrete edifice with armed watchtowers hovering over residential areas. In others, the wall is layers of electric fences and buffer zones of trenches, patrol paths, sensors and cameras. Whatever the structural differences, the effects are the same.

Palestinians will be imprisoned in walled ghettos, deprived of the most basic human rights. Such oppression and misery are already taking hold in the areas where the wall is currently being built. Some 10 percent of the West Bank is already affected by the destruction created by the wall's "first phase."

Building the wall has involved razing agricultural land, damaging irrigation networks, isolating water resources, and demolishing homes, stores and community infrastructure. With the daily subjugation of closures, sieges and curfews, Palestinians have become particularly dependent upon their lands for mere survival, but they are unable to access them. The fertile lands of 51 villages have been either confiscated or isolated because of the wall.

The latest opening of three "crossing points"—in addition to dividing Palestinian lands—further highlights the institutionalization of the land theft caused by the wall. In less than a month since the gates were opened, Palestinians have been shot, beaten, humiliated, and prevented from accessing their lands. Such scenes are a part of the daily Palestinian landscape around the wall. This wall and its so-called crossing points are inhuman and illegal.

For us, and for all who have witnessed what is taking place, the wall is nothing less than a collective noose around the Palestinian areas and their people. In Qalqiliya, where wall construction is nearing completion, close to 15 percent of its 41,600 inhabitants have been forced to leave, unable to survive in what many in the community call an apartheid cage. Among various solidarity groups, the wall is considered a project that embodies within it the long-term policy of occupation, discrimination and expulsion.

The wall is to guarantee that a free and sovereign Palestinian state will become impossible. Consequently, the recent usage by Sharon and Bush of the terms "viable" and "state" takes on a particularly cynical and empty meaning.

Their increased calls for a "state" run in direct parallel with the impossibility of such a state existing, as the sealing of the fate of the Palestinian people into ghettos of the dispossessed takes hold.

Jamal Juma' is coordinator of the Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network.

SCHWARZENEGGER RUN MAY TRIGGER TREMORS IN GOP

by Norman Solomon
Published by the Baltimore Sun

SAN FRANCISCO—A few days after Arnold Schwarzenegger announced his run for governor, Fox News pundit Brit Hume sounded hopeful.

"California is a special case," he said, "a place where conservatives and Republicans have been doing nothing but suck canal water now for a decade or so. And their standards of how pure you have to be, I think, are going to be very forgiving in this race, which will help Schwarzenegger."

Such predictions ignore a subterranean reality: Mr. Schwarzenegger's candidacy threatens to expose a deep fault line below the surface of long-standing GOP ideology—the disconnect between championing "the free market" and extolling the centrality of "family values." Nowhere is that fissure more extreme than in the realm of mass entertainment supplied by media conglomerates, and no political aspirant could better personify the contradiction than Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Widely seen as part of modern-day Americana, the gratuitous violence and sexual imagery of trademark Schwarzenegger movies are anathema to many religious fundamentalists and social conservatives. Those films may be commercial hits—since the mid-1980s, a slew of them have grossed a total of well over $1 billion at the U.S. box office—but they are apt to be deeply troubling to an array of voters, including many who are crucial to the Republican base.

Candidate Schwarzenegger seems to be tone-deaf about such concerns.

"In everything I ever did, I showed great leadership," he boasted to reporters after filing papers at the Los Angeles County registrar's office. "There were times when people said it could never be done, that an Austrian farm boy can come over to America, and get in the movie business, and be successful. ... And you know what happened? I became the highest-paid entertainer in the world."

In the Republican lexicon, becoming the "highest-paid" anything is usually laudable. But, in this case, not necessarily.

Like the huge media firms cashing in on his boffo performances, Mr. Schwarzenegger has profited handsomely. But many self-described conservatives, while agreeing with his adulation of lower taxes and the power of the free market, surely dislike Mr. Schwarzenegger's persona as an entertainer. They may find it impossible to separate that persona from his new on-screen work as a political candidate. The Schwarzenegger image, relentlessly marketed over the years, will make it extra difficult for the would-be governor to build bridges to conservatives who differ with him on abortion and gay rights.

For decades, the Republican Party has carefully threaded a pair of ideological needles—often denouncing the libertine media products of a "free market" that the party never tires of boosting. For the most part, GOP leaders have been able to finesse the dilemma by lavishing praise on the unfettered quest for profits while selectively condemning some of the results in mass entertainment—the kind of multiplex movie fare and prime-time TV programming that fill America's screens with salacious content.

This summer's battle on Capitol Hill over the latest Federal Communications Commission push to further deregulate the airwaves is an indication that time is running out for politicians to evade such contradictions. Spurred into action by the accelerating trend toward more centralized media ownership, a de facto coalition spanning left and right—including social and religious conservatives—bucked the White House with an overwhelming House vote to roll back some of the FCC's latest moves to let enormous media firms consolidate even more power.

When Mr. Schwarzenegger talks about his love of "free markets," none of the GOP faithful will mind. But when, in the political arena, he becomes a daily in-your-face reminder that media conglomerates have more power than ever to saturate TV sets, computer screens, video racks and theater chains with profit-driven entertainment that many parents and other Americans find deeply objectionable, the contradictions may seem too close to home and too glaring for comfort.

That's a key reason why, for the Bush administration, Mr. Schwarzenegger could turn out to be a dangerous symbol of capitalist mega-media run amok—and a lightning rod that draws unwelcome heat to the simmering tensions between free-market rhetoric and more distasteful media realities.

The GOP pols backing Mr. Schwarzenegger may believe that California's conservative voters are ready to "suck canal water" in order to get a Republican into the governor's office. But the candidate may end up serving as an embodiment of media swill that seems too distasteful to swallow.

Norman Solomon is executive director of the Institute for Public Accuracy. His latest book is 'Target Iraq: What the News Media Didn't Tell You' (Context Books, 2003).

Coral Reefs Doomed, Study Says

Centuries of Overfishing Killing Ecosystems

by Keay Davidson

Pummeled by overfishing, the world's coral reef ecosystems "will not survive for more than a few decades" unless drastic action is taken to protect them, experts warn.

To forestall a disaster that could devastate marine life, expose populous coastlines to stormier waves and economically devastate a tourism-dependent nation like Australia, the United States and other nations should vastly expand the designated "no take" zones—where fishing and other exploitation is banned—in coral ecosystems, said one author of an article for Friday's issue of *Science*.

Historical evidence dating back thousands of years proves that overfishing, not recent coral diseases or other causes, is the main cause of the slow death of the world's coral ecosystems, marine paleontologist John Pandolfi of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History and 11 other researchers say in the article.

"Overfishing seems to be the largest 'signal' that explains our data," Pandolfi said.

Another co-author, marine ecologist Enric Sala of Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, said, "What we're seeing in coral reefs is something akin to turning a tropical jungle into a golf course."

So far they've documented only one out-and-out extinction of a coral reef inhabitant—the Caribbean monk seal. But over the centuries, many other coral reef denizens have declined to the point where they have "no ecological impact—they're functionally 'gone,' like coral trout, snapper, many of the turtles, (and) the manatees," Pandolfi said.

Because coral ecosystem life forms are so interdependent, the continual loss of species "is like taking bricks out of a building, one by one. At a certain point the building is going to come crashing down," he added. "There are places like Jamaica where the percentage of live coral (as opposed to dead coral) is down to 5 percent."

As moviegoers who've seen *Finding Nemo* know, a coral reef "provides a lot of places for fish to live. Coral reefs occupy about 0.2 percent of the world's oceans, yet they contain 25 percent of the species diversity," Pandolfi said.

For fish, coral reefs are combination condos and restaurants. They're attractive to fish partly because they provide shelter from predators and all the food they can swallow. They also offer numerous idiosyncratic ecological "niches" for those oddball fish—the loners and bohemians of the undersea world—who prefer to, say, burrow into the sand beneath the coral rather than hobnob within the coral complex itself.

Ever since humans began fishing thousands of years ago, species that jam the undersea metropolises called coral ecosystems have been gradually disappearing—the biggest species first, such as green turtles—according to the researchers' analysis of historical and archaeological records.

They pored over documents such as Colonial-era records of fish catches from 14 coral reef ecosystems in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and Red Sea, including Australia's Great Barrier Reef and coral reefs of the Caribbean.

One of the 12 co-authors, zoology Professor Karen A. Bjorndal of the University of Florida, and her colleagues found more than 400 documents, some of them going back to the British colonial era and earlier, that recorded fish catches over the centuries in the Bahamas alone. They learned that native Bahamians severely depleted the coral ecosystem's green turtles long before the Brits arrived.

"I used to think that green turtles were basically in pristine shape when Columbus arrived (in Bahama five centuries ago), and I don't think that anymore," Bjorndal said in a press release issued by the university.

Based on the historical records, overfishing should be targeted as the No. 1 cause of coral ecosystem decline, the scientists concluded.

As an analogy, "imagine if 90 percent of the redwoods disappeared in Northern California," Sala said.

One solution: No-take zones should be greatly expanded in the world's coral ecosystems, Pandolfi said in a phone interview. The U.S. government has already designated five percent of coral ecosystems under its control as no-take zones. But Pandolfi advocates boosting the percentage to as high as 50 percent.

Pandolfi cites a legal precedent: The state of California's recent move to greatly expand protection to marine ecosystems off its coast. During the last year, the California state Fish and Game Commission boosted to 11 percent the no-take share of the 1,500-square-mile Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary off Santa Barbara and Ventura. The previous percentage was less than 1/10th of one percent, according to ocean environmental activists.

Besides threatening the food supply of much of the world, reef loss could imperil natural harbors that are sheltered by coral formation and could undermine tourism based on the appeal of vibrant coral life.

Failure to prevent continued coral reef deterioration could turn countries such as Australia—which are dependent on tourism at attractions such as the Great Barrier Reef—into "Third World countries," Pandolfi said.

Some anti-environmentalists might scoff, saying that humanity will continue to muddle through whatever happens to the coral reefs, Pandolfi acknowledged. He added: "If you want to live in a world where the ocean is mostly jellyfish and bacteria, there's nothing I can do about it."

WHO WANTS TO GO TO IRAQ NOW?

by Robert Fisk

What United Nations nation would ever contemplate sending peacekeeping troops to Iraq now? The men who are attacking the United States' occupation army are ruthless, but they are not stupid. They know that President Bush is getting desperate, that he will do anything—that he may even go to the dreaded Security Council for help—to reduce U.S. military losses in Iraq.

But yesterday's attack on the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad has slammed shut the door to that escape route.

Within hours of the car bomb explosion, we were being told that this was an attack on a "soft target," a blow against the United Nations itself. True, it was a "soft" target, although the machine gun nest on the roof of the U.N. building might have suggested that even the international body was militarizing itself. True, too, it was a shattering assault on the United Nations as an institution. But in reality, yesterday's attack was against the United States.

For it proves that no foreign organization—no NGO, no humanitarian organization, no investor, no businessman—can expect to be safe under the United States' occupation rule. The U.S. proconsul, L. Paul Bremer, was supposed to be an "anti-terrorism" expert. Yet since he arrived in Iraq, he has seen more "terrorism" than he can have dreamed of in his worst nightmares—and has been able to do nothing about it. Pipeline sabotage, electricity sabotage, water sabotage, attacks on U.S. troops and British troops and Iraqi policemen and now the bombing of the United Nations... what comes next? Americans can reconstruct the dead faces of Saddam's two sons but they can't reconstruct Iraq.

Of course, this is not the first indication that the "internationals" are in the sights of Iraq's fast-growing resistance movement. Last month, a U.N. employee was shot dead south of Baghdad. Two International Red Cross workers were murdered, the second of them a Sri Lankan employee killed in his clearly marked Red Cross car on Highway 8 just north of Hilla. When he was found, his blood was still pouring from the door of his vehicle. The Red Cross chief delegate, who signed the doomed man out on his mission to the south of Baghdad, is now leaving Iraq. Already, members of the Red Cross themselves are confined to their regional offices and cannot travel across Iraq by road.

An American contractor was killed in Tikrit a week ago. A British journalist was murdered in Baghdad last month. Who is safe now? Who will now feel safe at a Baghdad hotel when one of the most famous of them all—the old Canal Hotel that housed the U.N. arms inspectors before the invasion—has been blown up. Will the next "spectacular" be against occupation troops? Against the occupation leadership? Against the so-called Iraqi Interim Council? Against journalists?

The reaction to yesterday's tragedy could have been written in advance.

Americans will tell us that this proves how "desperate" Saddam's "dead-enders" have become—as if the attackers are more likely to give up as they become more successful in destroying U.S. rule in Iraq. The truth—however many of Saddam's old regime hands are involved—is that the Iraqi resistance organization now involves hundreds, if not thousands, of Sunni Muslims, many of them with no loyalty to the old regime. Increasingly, the Shiites are becoming involved in anti-American actions.

Future reaction is equally predictable. Unable to blame their daily cup of bitterness upon Saddam's former retinue, the Americans will have to conjure up foreign intervention. Saudi "terrorists," al-Qaida "terrorists," pro-Syrian "terrorists," pro-Iranian "terrorists"—any mysterious "terrorists" will do if their supposed existence covers up the painful reality: that our occupation has spawned a real home-grown Iraqi guerrilla army capable of humbling the greatest power on Earth.

With the Americans still trying to bring other nations on board for their Iraqi adventure—even the Indians have had the good sense to decline the invitation—yesterday's bombing was therefore aimed at the jugular of any future "peace-keeping" mission. The U.N. flag was supposed to guarantee security.

But in the past, a U.N. presence was always contingent upon the acquiescence of the sovereign power. With no sovereign power in existence in Iraq, the U.N.'s legitimacy was bound to be locked onto the occupation authority. Thus could it be seen—by the United States' detractors—as no more than an extension of U.S. power. Bush was happy to show his scorn for the United Nations when its inspectors failed to find any weapons of mass destruction and when its Security Council would not agree to the Anglo-American invasion. Now he cannot even protect U.N. lives in Iraq.

Does anyone want to invest in Iraq now? Does anyone want to put his money on a future "democracy" in Iraq?

Robert Fisk writes for The Independent in Great Britain.

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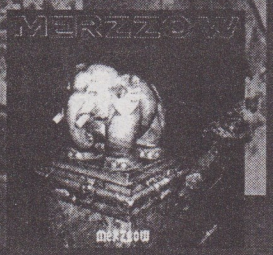

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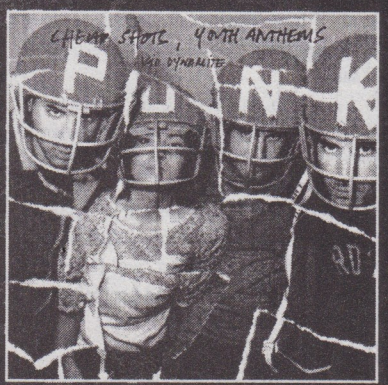

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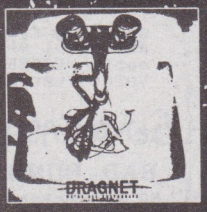

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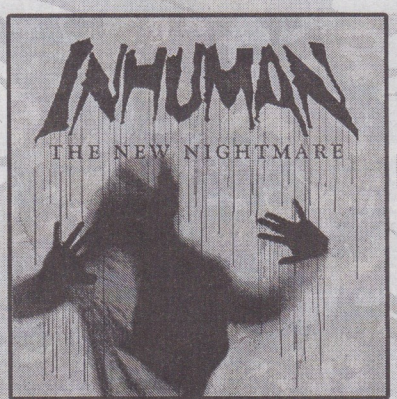

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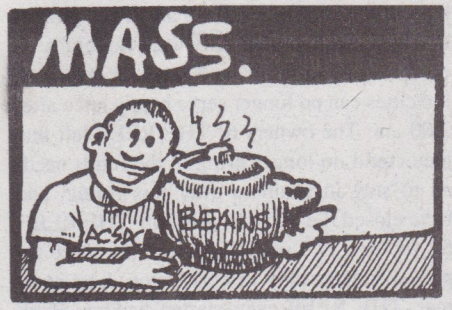

Boston Scene Report, Yay! Part 1 of 2

Hey, hey. Time for another Boston scene report. Our summer has been great and lots of bands have been on tour, putting out new records and/or playing kick-ass shows.

The Profits went on a month-long tour across to the west coast and back. And they have recorded a new full-length record to be released on **Rodent Popsicle Records** soon. And as a side note, Erica and Adam from The Profits run and produce their own public access cable show, called *The Roach Motel*, which has had great local acts on, like Toxic Narcotic and Czolgosz, who have just toured Europe and have a new CD coming out. *The Roach Motel* also shows recent and vintage live show footage and has guests that talk about political and social issues.

The Profits' drummer, Rich, serves in another local punk rock 'n' roll outfit, **SWAT**. They have also just completed a short tour and have self-released their third CD *Daze of Our Lives.* **Cut the Shit**, who were in these pages just a couple of months ago, are going on tour to promote their new 45 LP *Harmed And Dangerous,* out on Gloom Records. And I want you all to know that it's fucking great, and if CTS are coming to your town and you don't go to see them, you're an idiot.

Local psychobillies **The Photon Torpedoes** seem to have more of a following on the west coast than out here (which doesn't have much of a psychobilly scene). They just finished a week-long California tour with The Hellbillies and played the Heavy Rebel Weekend in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Their newest record, a split 7" with NH's rockabilly kings **Satan's Teardrop's**, is finally out, though apparently the guys at **Spiderbite Records** censored their insert, which had a "rape" collage featuring some pretty gruesome shit. You can only guess with a title like "The Revere Beach Rapist."

The Virus, from Pennsylvania, is on tour, and though they are not from Boston, their new singer is. Jasper, who was once the singer of a local street punk band **The Vigilanties**, now sings and tours with The Virus. Though he doesn't make Boston his home any more, we all wish him the best.

Suspect Device also went on a short tour, and has also just had two tracks released on TKO Records' first installment of *Scene Report,* a series of CDs that highlight local punk bands in major cities. They have chosen Boston as the first installment, which is a pretty big honor. The first track by SD, "The Life We Lead," can be heard every Wednesday as the opening theme of another cable access punk show with the same name that features local street punk and oi bands like The Blue Bloods, Confront and The Kings of Nuthin'.

Along with Suspect Device on the Boston *Scene Report* compilation is the **A-Team**, who also went on a short tour this summer, and **The Fast Actin' Fuses,** who have a Rodent Popsicle release under their belt. **Tommy and The Terrors** also contribute two tracks, and have just released a great full-length on...yup, you guessed it, Rodent Popsicle Records. Tommy and The Terrors and The A-team joined 20 other bands to play the **Punk Rock Revival** show in nearby Worcester at the end of July. The all-day festival included the following bands (I hope I get them all): **The Midnight Creeps** (who were also, I think, the only American band asked to play the UK Holidays In The Sun this year), **RNR,** my favorite local hardcore band, who has a new full-length LP coming out on Deadalive Records, **None More Black, Confront, USM, A Global Threat, Dirty Water** (who also released a new record a couple of months ago and have members from The Ducky Boys), **Street Dogs** (Mike MacHollan's—The Dropkick Murphy's original singer's—new band), **The Deterrents, These Lies, Mission 23, The Bronx, The River City Rebels, Death Threat, The Casualties, Murphy's Law** (who as far as I'm concerned, blew all of the other headlining bands out of the water) **Good Riddance, GBH, Circle Jerks, and Blood For Blood,** who still play occasionally, but seem to be on hiatus.

In the next week we have another huge event here, called the **Suburban Noise Festival**. The Topsfield Fairgrounds will host the 16+ act all-day shindig, which will feature some of the best long-time thrash and punk bands like **DOA**, **DRI**, and local hardcore legends **Slapshot** (who I guess have a $3000 in-town guarantee!?!) Of course all of the "big" Boston bands are coming out of the woodwork to play like MTV hopefuls **The Unseen**, Virgin Records recording artists **The Explosion**, **Darkbuster**, our favorite local underdogs **Toxic Narcotic** who are about to embark on a two-month tour with English legends the **UK Subs**, **The Marvels** (who I think suck), **The USM** (suck!), and big-time rock-a-punky outfit **The Kings of Nuthin'**. Also, **Duane Peters and The Hunns**, **Kill Your Idols**, **Down By Law**, **The Pseudo Heroes**, and **The Amazombies**. This festival is great because the tickets are only $20, which only seems like a lot, until you find out that most of the proceeds will go to charities like **The Fund for Autistic Children** and **The Salem Boys and Girls Club**. Also Stu, the promoter, has promised $1 bottles of water and $1 CDs. I guess we'll just find out. Taking a promoter's word is usually a roll of the dice.

There has still been no progress on opening an all-ages venue here, but bands still seem to find places to play. **The All Asia Cafe** in Cambridge has hosted the most shows. They charge no money at the door (which means the bands don't get paid) but it is all-ages with a bar, which makes for some great shows considering that the drinkers can drink and the kiddies can enjoy a good show. To any

of you who think that this may not seem like such a big deal, here it is. We don't have too many places to have shows, so the all-ages with a bar is huge to us. Various VFW halls and Elk's Lodges also serve as show places. **The Choppin' Block** is still putting on shows and seems to be the popular venue for the drinking crowd.

National magazines like ***Fat Day*** and ***Lollypop*** still operate out of Boston, but don't even begin to have anything to do with the local scene. ***Suburban Voice*** has just put out another issue that happens to be the 20th anniversary issue. Al Quint still publishes a good zine, but they are too far and few between. My zine, ***No13***, is the only local punk zine that provides interviews, show listings, and the like. It provides a necessary service to our scene. Others have dabbled with zines, but none seem to be of merit.

If you're in Boston you gotta check out some of our record stores, which I think may be some of the best in the country. **Mars Records** provide ultra-rare punk/hardcore/oi records that are a great find, but you will pay an arm and a leg. The other day they had a sealed and signed copy of SSD's *The Kids Will Have Their Say*...wow. **Second Coming Records** (not owned by the same New York people) was just bought out and is now almost a strictly punk rock record store and also sells shirts, new and used, patches, jackets, record players, and stereo equipment. Mike, the owner, is also considering putting out some records by local punk bands.

Our local scene has its ups and downs, and is in no way consistent, but it is ours, and most of us try the best we can to use our individual talents towards helping each other out. For such a big an old scene, there is relatively little trouble. I would say that what we have now in Boston is another wave of great bands and great people. There is no doubt in my mind that some of the bands that are now appearing here will make an impact on the national scene.

Pat -The FNS Guy-
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www.FNSBoston.com

SOUTH CAROLINA
By Burns Down (skulls138@aol.com) 109 Tupalo Road (Summerville Farms), Summerville, SC 29483

Greetings from the South Carolina Low Country. The Low Country is considered to be Charleston and the surrounding area. You see, South Carolina is divided into three parts: The Upstate, The Midlands, and The Low Country. From the mountains to the sea. SC is a versatile state, with many areas full of gorgeous scenery. It's not all trailer parks, old barns, dilapidated farm equipment and buildings. The state is also full of versatile people and bands. Not just full of racist, uneducated rednecks and country or rap metal bands.

As far as the state of the scene in the Low Country, it's pretty cool. The scene's been cooler, but the scene here has also been in worse shape by far. The biggest thing to affect the scene here has been the closing of a club called **THE REEF**. THE REEF fell victim to the ever-changing laws in the area that govern alcohol sales. For the past few years, there have been battles between club owners and the "powers that be" over the right for bars to sell booze past 2:00 am. The "powers that be" finally won the war. So clubs in downtown Charleston and some of the satellite cities can no longer serve happy juice after 2:00 am. The owners of THE REEF felt that they could no longer bring in the funds needed to stay in business after this ruling, and have closed the doors of the club. THE REEF, for the past two years, has been *the* place for punk bands to play in Charleston. Last summer, THE REEF even started having "Punk Rock Night" every Thursday. These "Punk Nights" gave all of the punk bands around here a great place to play. The sound system was incredible, the guys who ran the club treated all bands with respect, and bands got paid every time they played. We got to see a whole bunch of touring bands at THE REEF, who we would normally get to see at an American Legion, someone's house/barn, or have to drive to the Upstate or another state to see.

As THE REEF closed its doors, another cool bar was opening. This new one is **THE WAREHOUSE**. Like THE REEF, THE WAREHOUSE features bands that play all styles of music, it welcomes punk acts. So far, only a couple of local punk bands have played there; HYBRID MUTANTS, DOUBLE O and SCOUT'S HONOR, and the place was packed at both shows. I look forward to many punk shows at THE WAREHOUSE, and maybe we can talk them into doing a "punk night."

A couple of other clubs in the Low Country that have punk bands from time to time are **CUMBERLAND'S** and **THE MUSIC FARM.** The Upstate has two awesome clubs for punk shows: **UNCLE DOCTOR'S** and **GROUND ZERO**. In the Low Country, there are at least two punk shows somewhere each week. The crowds come out for some shows, and for some they don't. More people turned out for shows bank in the day, when they were few and far between.

Here's the scoop on some Sand Lapper bands. Sand Lapper is a nickname that us South Carolinians call ourselves. Well, some of us do. I'll list web addresses and/or contacts for the bands I mention, at the end of the report. Check out the band's sites and their music!

HYBRID MUTANTS have just released their third CD, *Escape Velocity*. This is my favorite local band and this CD is my favorite release from them. The song "Schizo Blitzo," from the new CD is a fucking mind blower! HYBRID MUTANTS are a five-piece that has been around for about five years or so. They play catchy, old school style punk

Scene reports

with splashes of metal and hardcore thrown in. Saw them do an incredible set last month at THE WAREHOUSE, as they were ending their "Nowhere Slow Tour." Don't know when they are playing around here again. Soon, I hope.

SCOUT'S HONOR has recently added a new guitarist, and is sounding better than ever. It is so fun to watch these guys play. The drummer and bass player are twins and make a killer rhythm section. Their singer keeps getting better. SCOUT'S HONOR is now a four-piece and they play hard poppy punk rock, with balls.

FLAMIN'ANUS has released a CD called *Smokin'Crack.* They have not played around here for a while, but I heard they were playing in Georgia and Tennessee this month. They recently lost their guitarist, but have added a new one. FLAMIN'ANUS is a four-piece that plays old school style punk rock, and has been a much-loved staple of our scene forever.

DOUBLE O SEVEN has changed its name to DOUBLE O. They didn't like folks linking them to James Bond. Go figure. Last saw DOUBLE O at THE WAREHOUSE last month with HYBRID MUTANTS. They put on a great show. DOUBLE O is a five-piece, and they play poppy punk.

THE REJECTERS have been searching for a singer since January. Word was out of a break up, but I've been assured that the band is still around, and will resurface with a new singer this summer. THE REJECTERS are a soon to be a four-piece again, that plays metalized punk with a big dose of hell thrown in. They have been missed from the scene, and we hope to see them soon.

One local band that did break up and will surely be missed is **FLK** (Funny Looking Kids). FLK was around for many years. They mixed their ska-laced punk with some art props and a gallon of fun. FLK played up and down the East Coast, and had a release on Fast Music. The FLK singer will continue with his other band, **MATTER**, and the drummer has joined the rockabilly band **GO BABY GO.** Maybe one day the guys will get together for some kind of reunion show or something. I certainly hope so.

MR. PINK has been around for about a year or so. They play around here often, but I haven't seen them play since THE REEF closed. They have a new demo out that they offer for free on their website. They also run a cool message board for the local music scene. MR. PINK is a three-piece that plays crusty old school punk.

THE UNSPEAKABLES and **THE HEATHENS** are two local, four-piece punk bands that have been around for about a year or so, and often play shows together. They both have new self-released CDs out, and they both rock! Both bands are part of the new breed of old school bands currently enjoying the old school punk revival that's happening down here.

Of course, outside of the Low Country, there are other bands.

From the dark town of Florence, comes SC's own legendary horror-ska outfit known as **THE INDEPENDENTS.** These guys have been around since 1989. Joey Ramone once managed them! THE INDEPENDENTS have a new CD out called *Live from Murder Beach.* This five-piece is headed for the studio this summer to work on new songs.

ANTISEEN has been around forever—as long if not longer than *MRR.* They just had a really cool 20th anniversary show [*We had our 20th anniversary last year! — ed.*] These Boys From Brutalsville will be playing all over this summer, and have CDs and a DVD on the way. ANTISEEN is a four-piece that plays southern fried punk rock with a side order of blood.

THE SCRUBBIES are from our capital city, Columbia. THE SCRUBBIES have been around since the early 90s. They don't make it down to the Low Country too often, but when they do everybody shows up for a rocking good time. THE SCRUBBIES are a four-piece that plays classic, punk-inspired rock and roll.

Also from Columbia is **F-13.** F-13's newest CD is called *When Humans Attack.* It's one of the best punk CDs out right now. These guys have been around a long time. F-13 is a three-piece that plays blues-influenced hardcore.

There are many more punk bands in SC than I've mentioned here, so come down and check them *all* out. If you are in a band and on tour this summer, please come our way. I hope the names of clubs I listed help.

HYBRID MUTANTS:
http://members.aol.com/Hothgang1/hybrid.html
FLAMIN'ANUS:
www.angelfire.com/sc/flaminanus/
THE REJECTERS:
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Fri. 03rd- Bel- Liege*+
Sat. 04th- Bel- Gent- Frontline+
Sun. 05th- UK- London THE SWAN*
Mon. 06th- UK-Bristol*
Tues. 07th- UK- Liverpool- Slaughterhouse*+
Wed. 08th- Ireland- Dublin- Music Room*
Thur. 09th- Ireland- Cork*
Fri. 10th- Ireland- Belfast- Front Page*
Sat. 11th- Scotland- Aberdeen- Dr. Drakes*
Sun. 12th- UK- Bradford- 11in12 Club*
Mon. 13th- UK- Southampton TBC*
Tue. 14th- FRA- Paris*
Wed. 15th- FRA- Tours*
Thur. 16th- FRA- Angers*
Fri. 17th- FRA- La Ferriere- Mat'sa Cafe*
Sat. 18th- FRA- Bordeaux*
Sun. 19th- FRA- Grenoble*+
Mon. 20th- T.B.A.*
Tue. 21st- ITA- Vigevano (Milano)*
Wed. 22nd- ITA- Bologna "Atlantide squat"*
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Fri. 31st- CZ- praha- Papirna+

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Mon. 3rd- POL- Lublin-
Tue. 4th- POL- Warszawa+
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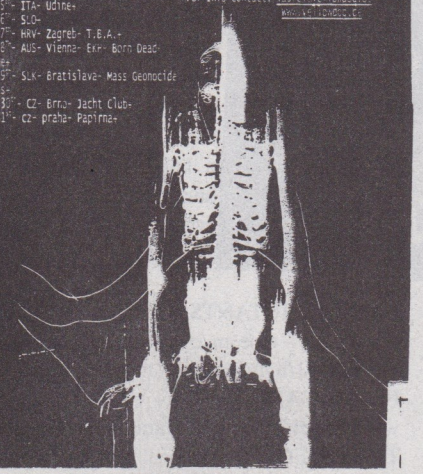

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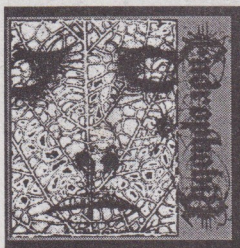

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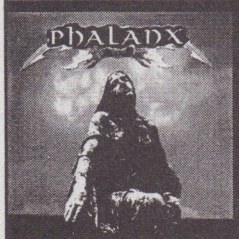

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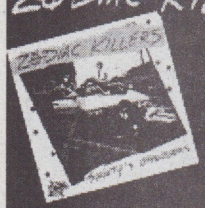

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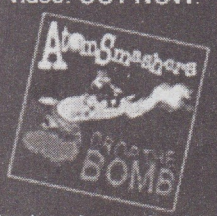

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NO TIME LEFT

NO TIME LEFT are a five-piece from Buffalo, New York. They have an EP out called Zero Effort Solution. It's on a label called Third Party Records, which the singer Nick runs. They play a style of 70s biker rock mixed with youth crew, something that I find pretty unique in the scene. You never really see these two styles of music merge together.

Interview by Stephe Perry.

Photos by Mark Rodenhizer.

MRR: Who is in the band and what do you play?

No Time Left: Adam (bass), Eric (guitar), Jerid (guitar), Joe (drums), Nick (vocals).

MRR: Can you break down the punk rock genealogy for me? Which bands are you in, which bands have you been in, and that kind of stuff?

Nick: This is going to take up the rest of the show.

MRR: Yeah, I figured.

Adam: If it counts the first band I was ever really in, it was a pop-punk type band. We were called the SHINGLES. We were kind of bad. I played guitar and I ended up playing bass towards the end. Right now I am in NO TIME LEFT, obviously, and I am in another band called PROJECT GRIZZLY, which is a grindcore band. It's a good time. I have fun. I am starting to play drums in another band in Buffalo.

MRR: Do you guys have a name yet?

Adam: No. No name yet. We just started up. We've only had two practices. That's all I do right now.

Eric: I've been in a lot of bands. I guess most notable, NO REASON. I was in HALF MAST for a little while with Nick, MINDSET, and XSATAN'SXHELPERSX. Many bands throughout the strange mid-90s period, but right now I sing for THEY LIVE, I play guitar in NO TIME LEFT, and I play drums in a band called RUNNING FOR COVER with some of our friends from Buffalo. I know I have seven bands, so if I didn't mention seven yet. Let's see, I mentioned three. I play in a couple of things that don't really have a name. Jerid and I also play in another band called the KILLING FIELDS. He'll tell you about that too when it's his turn. I don't think I'm missing anything else.

MRR: ARMED WITH INTELLIGENCE?

Eric: No, that band broke up. It kind of split into

two different bands, I OBJECT, which is Ryan and Barb, the singers from ARMED WITH INTELLIGENCE, and then Pat, Alex and I still play music together with a different vocalist, we don't exactly have a name yet. We were thinking of something like UNICORN or the BUSH DYNASTY, something like that.

Jerid: The first band that I was in was short-lived; it was called SLIT THROAT. We only played a couple of shows. I'm in a band with Eric, as he previously mentioned, called KILLING FIELDS. We played our first two shows, three and a half years ago, and haven't done anything since except practice, like every week for three years.

Joe: I don't really have a history besides FIRE IN THE STATE, but I am currently playing in five bands. There is NO TIME LEFT, a band that formed out of the ashes of FIRE IN THE STATE called ABUSING THE WORD, USURP which is looking like it is on and off a lot, a side project from that, and I just started playing drums in THEY LIVE.

Nick: I was in HALF MAST. I also was in a band with Eric and Jerid called NOT! That existed for a year.

MRR: One of my most favorite bands. That MELEE show was amazing.

Nick: Apparently this band called MAD RATS, that did a record on 625 Thrashcore, is covering a NOT! song. They play it live and supposedly it will appear on one of their upcoming recordings.

MRR: They are from Portugal, yes?

Nick: I also play guitar in ON-X-ALERT.

MRR: How did NO TIME LEFT start? How did you form? How did this go? What's the history?

Eric: I will give you the history with a few interjections from Nick, I suppose if he feels the need to blast me. Basically, I used to run this record store called Discovery Records. I had played in HALF MAST with Nick and there was a lull where Nick really didn't have a band going. One day, he came into Discovery Records when my brother and I were there. He brought in this piece of paper, one of those pieces of paper with the little dangly numbers on it, like "Vocalist Looking for Band.". My brother and I thought it was just pathetic and kind of a travesty - we knew Nick was a good vocalist, was a good lyricist and a good guy. We decided that it would be unfair to let him go that route, so we decided pretty much that day that we wanted to start a band and have Nick sing. So we just put together some skate rock songs, started playing and brought Nick down. It evolved into this and we have just kind of picked up the members along the way. My brother ended up quitting. He used to play drums in NO TIME LEFT. He pretty much ended up quitting hardcore. Then we picked up Joe, because he is a really good drummer and a good guy.

Nick: I just want to say in my defense, during the period where I wasn't in a band, I had gone through a bunch of different band projects that were way more pathetic than the little pull tab thing that I had hung up on the wall. So that wasn't rock bottom. (*laughter*)

MRR: Where does the name NO TIME LEFT come from? Is there a meaning behind the name?

Eric: We were looking for a band name, sitting in a diner one night, and my brother came up with the name NO TIME LEFT. Nick kind of thought it was out of nowhere, or maybe that it was the SLAPSHOT song. But in actuality, it goes back to an early childhood influence that my father bestowed upon my brother and I, which is the awesome Canadian rock band, the GUESS WHO. They have a song called "No Time Left." My brother thought of that song, thought it would be a cool band name and shouted it out at the dinner table. And here we are, NO TIME LEFT.

Nick: After we had decided on the name, I did attach meaning to it. I had been working at a job in the mall and I absolutely hated it, I was managing a store called *Games Workshop*. Everyday it felt like I had been wasting my time. Because I had been in bands, I knew how much fun it was. I knew how much fulfillment it gave me to be in bands and talk about the things that I believe in to kids, to think that the years of my life where I could actually have the time, the energy, and the inclination to go on adventures through touring. I believe all that was just being pissed away. NO TIME LEFT is a reflection on that, on how there is no time left for me to do the things that I wanted to do. So, that is where the meaning comes from for me.

Jerid: It is sad because the little mini pits never come to life.

MRR: Describe your sound. What have others written about NO TIME LEFT? The EP has been out for a little bit. You've probably gotten some feedback on what you sound like from critics. What do people say?

Eric: My mom thinks that we sound like a cross between the F.U.'s and...

MRR: Your mom doesn't know the F.U.'s...

Eric: She has the *My America* LP.

MRR: Anyway.

Eric: Anyway. Reviews pretty much always say...

MRR: My mom has the F.U.'s record too.

Eric: Does she really?

MRR: She doesn't know it's the F.U.'s. She understands it as "that fucking shit she has to listen to through my bedroom walls."

Eric: Basically every review that we agree with, pretty much says that we are youthful, fast hardcore with bulldozer 70s rock kind of stuff thrown in. I guess that's, at least, from a musical standpoint, I write most of the songs and the influences musically for me are old punk hardcore bands like F.U.'s and TOXIC REASONS and 70s rock bands like THIN LIZZY and MOTORHEAD. Fusing the two together seems so appropriate. The guitar tones are so similar. A lot of those bands, especially TOXIC REASONS and BLACK FLAG are punk hardcore bands, but they just border on rock and roll, teeter tottering. I am really into bringing out that raging rock and roll. It's something that I am really into. Not being afraid of solos, if you can pull them off tastefully. Also, I didn't want to just say that old bands influenced me.

MRR: It just seems like a departure to me. Knowing the bands that you are in, they have traditionally had a different sound and when NO TIME LEFT came out, it caught me off guard.

Eric: Really?

MRR: With all the rock and roll.

Eric: Stephe makes handlebar motorcycle gestures.

MRR: It seemed like a departure to me or that you were trying to express yourself in another way with this sound that was sort of picking up with the rock scene in Scandinavia. It seemed like this was a new challenge to you, you know.

Eric: Honestly, not to just blow this off, but that's not it at all. It is just the styles of music that I have really been interested in doing and the songs that I write. All of us have a lot of different musical influences. I know for myself, I'm into a lot of different styles of music. Pretty much any genre of music you name, aside from maybe like ska, I could name you a good list of bands that I enjoy from that genre, even dance pop. I can pretty much appreciate anything.

MRR: But I am sure all that stuff doesn't come into NO TIME LEFT.

Eric: No, no, no. It definitely doesn't come into NO TIME LEFT. We definitely have a sound. It is not exactly formulaic, but I can tell when it's a NO TIME LEFT song and when it's not. I write songs for other bands that I am in, like THEY LIVE and what not, but I always know when I am writing a NO TIME LEFT song. I am not like, "if it is not a NO TIME LEFT song, then it must be a THEY LIVE song." Our

sound is definitely something that we specifically try for. I also didn't want to sound like a jaded old fart that is like, "I just want to bring back all those old bands." New Buffalo bands, regional bands and bands that we meet on tour, we are constantly influenced by. We still get really excited about new records. We are all pretty much active in picking up new stuff, that's what inspires us to keep rolling.

Nick: Agreed.

Eric: Sorry if that was long winded.

MRR: No, I actually appreciate that because I think NO TIME LEFT have a unique sound, which is difficult to do in hardcore, because a lot of it has been done before. We are talking about 20 years on, in punk rock. You do fuse a rock sound and bring a youth crew aspect to it. That seems to be a regional sound for Buffalo bands to me. Now I am probably missing this but I do hear youth crew elements in a lot of Buffalo bands. It seems to be almost something like a regional sound and it is amazing. But I was also wondering about some of the other bands that we have talked about, Japanese and Swedish bands. Those bands are more rock influenced. Does some of that filter into NO TIME LEFT?

Eric: I'm sure it does. Everything around you is going to filter into everything that you do, from music to the collapse of industry. As far as NO TIME LEFT, it is pretty much hardcore and rock. It's loud, so that's another thing.

Nick: Loud, very loud. I think that if you were going to pinpoint that, there is a youth crew influence to a lot of Buffalo bands. Buffalo did have a good batch of youth crew bands in the mid-90s and some of the influence probably does still kick around. I think it's most apparent in NO TIME LEFT from the approach, to the subject matter, to what some of the lyrics are about, to how the vocals flow. Instead of being extremely fast and rapid over the parts like DRI would, it's part of the delivery. I don't think NO TIME LEFT would sound as youth crew, if I weren't the singer.

Eric: Which we have considered many times, (*laughter*) replacing Nick to get rid of that pesky youth crew influence.

MRR: I wouldn't just blame it on Nick. I hear tripping parts in drumbeats that sound like you are about to do a breakaway. I do hear breakdowns.

Eric: That's because Joe is the shit.

MRR: He is. But I hear guitars … there are a lot of things that are youth crew inspired, but I won't belabour it. OK, I wanted to pass the mic a bit more and ask you about your favorite NO TIME LEFT song from a lyrical standpoint and why. We can ask Nick first, he can get the ball rolling? You have written most of them.

Nick: Yes, but I have never really thought about which one is my favorite. There is a song off the new record called "Rapid Transit to Nowhere." I have an immense interest recently in Buffalo and how it's developed and how the population of Buffalo in the past 50 years has been cut in half. People have been leaving Buffalo in mass and a lot of that stems from, you know we were an industrial city that is now part of this rust belt and there was no plans in place to deal with the ending of this industrial collapse. We go through leader after leader after leader and it just flounders. It makes me so sad, because I drive around Buffalo and there is beautiful architecture in spots. We try to do these things to boost the economy, like we have a Rapid Transit system that's all of about three miles long that was originally supposed to go from my suburb of Amherst, all the way to downtown Buffalo. There were supposed to be all sorts of branches off of it. Instead, it turned into this three-mile straight run. My hometown of Amherst blocked every chance of it going into Amherst, because we didn't want to bring the people from the city into Amherst. There is this fear of bringing people from the city into Amherst, so there is no cooperation between the town and the city of Buffalo. So every time they do these things to try and boost the economy, everything just gets shut down and everything just flounders. It's so sad to me because Buffalo has a rich history and instead it's a craphole. I love it, but it's definitely seen much better days. So that song, I just loving singing it because it is deeply personal to me in an odd sort of way.

Adam: I would have to say that one of my favorite songs is the first song off the 10" called "Indentured Servant," because it is about falling into debt and having that debt run your life. I kind of know what it's like to be in debt because I have a credit car, but it's all for gear. I just bought some guitar equipment (*laughter*). I can't help it though. I have this thing called GAS, gear acquisition syndrome, and you just get yourself sucked in and it takes forever to pay them off. You always have this constant burden on your chest. All the time it is like, "Shit, I've got to make these payments."

Eric: I too have gear acquisition syndrome, in more ways then one. There are a number of favorite songs lyrically, because I like Nick's lyrics. "The Message We Send" is a particularly strong song. I think that song is something I can never get tired of hardcore bands singing about because it is something that is always present. It's a problem. I feel that homophobic, sexist and racist language in hardcore punk is wrong, it clearly does not have a place there. It's detrimental. It makes the punk scene just as bad as the outside world; when it is supposed to be some sort of counterculture or better place. Say someone walks into a show for the first time, ready to give this screaming music a chance. They're a younger kid struggling with their sexual identity and then they hear "Ah man, that's record fucking gay" or "Ahhh, you fag," from the stage, from the supposed hardcore punk bands. If you use the label punk or hardcore, you're attached at least, to some sort of moral or ethic. And just to hear that sort of thing, people might feel really uncomfortable or really alienated. They might think that there is no place for them in this scene. It's just a disgusting thing. I can't believe that after all these years, after all these songs, that there is still a big problem in that department. This may be well tread territory, but if it didn't solve the problem, then we got to keep screaming about it.

Nick: I just want to say real quickly that hardcore and punk is a place for freaks and misfits. It is not just a place for white, straight, freaks and misfits.

Jerid: My favorite song is "Rapid Transit to Nowhere," but we already covered that, so I will have to go with "Rise of the Reactionary," which is one of our newer songs. It just kind of disgusts me, the attitude of people in hardcore punk, with the rise of right wing politics. If that's what you really believe, then fine. I just see people falling into the

norm, using derogatory language, even with newer stuff like the war. It just really disgusts me. I love hardcore/punk and I see too many people in this scene who think they are changing the world just by going to a show or buying a record. It's totally not. There is nothing I like better than listening to a record, but I am really not improving the world by doing it. I think if you allow yourself to believe that, then you are falling into false pretences and that's not good for anybody.

Joe: I would have to say that I like "Youth Culture Industry." Basically the message is about how pissed we our about having our DIY culture co-opted by capitalism. "Turning what we make into a profit," as the first line goes, "they will take what we have made and sell it back to us if we let them." "If we let them," is what really stands out in my mind because DIY is an antithesis to going out a buying these things. DIY culture is based around empowerment by being able to turn garbage into something you really need. To make any change in your local community through a revolutionary lifestyle you have to try to find ways without submitting to any system of capitalism. Therefore, the more things you can do outside of that, things you can make yourself, that's one of the more empowering and revolutionary things that you can do for yourself and your community. That's what I get out of that song.

Eric: I just want to extrapolate on what Joe said for a brief second, because that's also one of my favorite songs. Punk and hardcore, like it or not, has a fashion attached to it,

but the difference is that from the get go the fashion involved with punk and hardcore was a very out of vogue, homemade, kind of fashion. You created a piece of art out of nothing and you wore it. You found a rag on the ground and you turned it into a shirt. Now you have these Texas oil billionaires opening stores like Hot Topic and selling fake versions of ripped up shirts that are ripped at the factory at fashion prices. It's as if you couldn't do it yourself or don't have the power to do it yourself. It really sucks that there is something about the way they market these items to younger people getting into punk/hardcore from the outside. These kids feel they need that certain uniform or certain piece of gear and they see it for sale at Hot Topic. They think, "Oh that's where all these people that I see must have gotten their clothing." Then they end up rolled up in the same thing as every other culture and that's totally blatant capitalism. It's just like working a crappy job and getting just enough money to buy their crappy fashionable clothes. Even though it's a different look then your average hip gap clothes, it's still a fashion. It's still dangerous, and it's still sold by the same sleazy people. It's just like they're spokespeople, like they have their slick pre-packaged versions of what we do and it's generations and generations lost. I mean it is totally slick, corporate, and disgusting to us, but to the untrained ear it sounds like there are similarities between things like BLINK 182, AVRIL LAVIGNE and things that DIY hardcore/punk bands do. They use those people as the spokespeople, trying to keep these kids on the outside, where they can control everything that they purchase and everything that they listen to, just like with every other culture. That's not what punk and hardcore is about. It's about community, something more than just buying things.

MRR: I wanted to talk about "Zero Effort Solution." It became the name of the EP. What's the idea behind the song?

Nick: Basically "Zero Effort Solution" is my perception of people who rely on drugs, like the prescription pharmaceuticals that are advertised on TV. In the United States you weren't allowed to advertise prescription pharmaceuticals until 1998, and then all of a sudden there is a flood of them on the television. You know they were as common as car commercials. All these different pharmaceuticals were a quick fix. People in this day and age, they don't seem to want to work to try and make themselves better. If there is some part of them that they don't like, they would rather take a pill, then eat properly and exercise. They would rather take some sort of diet supplement to try and basically get around all the necessary things to make him or herself better. They want the quick fix. I knew lots of people who ended up going onto anti-depressants. I know that there are people that have serious issues and definitely need to be on a drug like Paxil, but there are a lot of people who see a commercial on TV or they talk to a friend and they say to them, "Oh, you're down. You should go to the doctor and get on this drug Paxil." So rather than just figuring out your girlfriend broke up with you, you need to get over it, they would rather circumvent going through the healing process, by just covering it up with some sort of drug. That's where the name "Zero Effort Solution" came from.

MRR: The EP was released long before George Junior was in power and before there was a "War on Terrorism." Are you telling me that "Wartime Economy" is not about the latest series of wars? When I think of "Wartime Economy," I think of an anti-war song or a song about the arms industries, but it's actually not about that. What is this song about?

Nick: The song is about how in the hardcore scene over the years there have been all sorts of issues that people have rallied behind. There was the straight edge movement, there was the vegan movement of the 90s, and there was Krishna consciousness. Basically the analogy is that these different movements in the scene, they get a whole lot of support and whole lot of momentum, and everybody is for this or against these different ideas. What ends up happening is everybody gets super pumped about the issue and then all of a sudden, it just peters out. Veganism was such a major topic of the 90s, as was the whole anti-sexism, homophobia thing. Then all of a sudden there was a whole shift in the culture, not just in the hardcore scene, but in the whole world, where people started to care less about those things because the world was getting too PC. So the analogy to a "Wartime Economy" is that when a nation goes to war usually all the people in that nation will rally together and it totally changes the dynamic. People went out and bought war bonds back in WWII or right when September 11th happened people were really worried about what was going to happen to the economy, because the economy was already going to crap in the United States, so George Bush got in front of the world and said you have to go out and spend money. We need to keep this economy going. You can't be hiding in your houses afraid because it is going to cause too many problems, so everybody rallied. But it wasn't enough of a rally, even though there was this huge support. In the hardcore scene, there were definitely a larger number of people going to shows. If you went to a show in Syracuse in 1995, compared to going to a show now, there were distros and people everywhere. It was kind of crazy and it was because all these people were rallying behind this whole movement. So that's where the analogy comes from.

MRR: Tell us about Buffalo. It's a scene that has always had a hardcore scene for better or for worse. Right now it has really been on the upswing. What's it like there?

Eric: It's kind of a split scene. There is your clean, more metallic, kind of metal-core bands and emo-core bands. They play in large clubs and whatnot. Then there are bands like us who primarily play smaller clubs and basement type of places. Joe and I live at a house called 99 Custer Street and we do a lot of the shows in Buffalo. We basically saw that the type of music, the type of hardcore punk that we are into, was under-represented. There weren't any appropriate venues, so a bunch of us decided to take action, get a house and do some shows. We have been going for about three years now.

MRR: That seems to be the turning point, Custer Street. From an outside perspective, once Custer Street started doing shows, all of a sudden this huge scene started coming out. We refer to it as the Buffalo basement scene. What are some of the advantages to having a place like this?

Eric: Oh well, it cuts out the middleman, first off. Touring bands that might not be able to get a show in Buffalo otherwise, previous to our existence, can now get shows. They can get a decent amount of gas money, they don't have to be a bigger band, and they don't have to be hardly anybody. You can come through and if you're nice people, you can get a show. If you're up there and you're into it, I am pretty sure that a lot of people will dig it. They will pick up your stuff and will follow you throughout what you do as a band. I have seen it happen so many times. A band out of the blue will call me up, need to hop on a show and they'll get on a show. For the last couple of years, those bands have been people in Buffalo's favorite bands. People will wonder when those bands are going to come back.

MRR: They would have never had a chance to see them.

Eric: I don't want to take credit for it by saying, "When 99 Custer came, you know, that's when things really shaped up." But I think that…

MRR: …but it initiated a community spirit around the scene. All of a sudden there was a place for people to start playing, start meeting people and creating bands. I see all these spin-offs happening out of Custer Street. I don't want to take away any of the credit from it. There are a lot of things here that can act as a blueprint for developing a scene.

Eric: Basically, we decided to have a forum. We all played in bands and we wanted to have regular shows. We got tired of opening for bigger bands at crummy clubs, so we did something about it. That's all you have to do in any town. Any town can have a scene, if there are a few fun kids who like to play music. If you start having fun and doing good shows, people will just move there. Buffalo is rapidly expanding. Our drummer Joe, for instance, moved to Buffalo from Medina, New York (which is not a gigantic move). Some other people from Medina have moved to Buffalo. There are four punk houses now on Custer Street.

MRR: So good things grow.

Eric: Custer Street is one block long in the University Heights district of Buffalo and there are four punk houses on that street. You just have to stick it out through the desolate times. Like you were saying, Buffalo has had its peaks and valleys, but you stick it out through the crummy times and you do your bands. You write to people and sometimes the scene only exists through the mail, like the international scene. For a few years, shows were a lot scarcer. I pretty much maintained hardcore pride through mailorder and correspondence. You just got to do what you go to do and that's pretty much it.

MRR: It sounds like you have built something really good. You guys toured the states last year. Where did you go?

Eric: To California and back. We played some big cities, but we played a lot of small towns where there is just an awesome pocket of kids tucked away, there that are really cranked for a show. Small town scenes are totally awesome, to the point where when I've set up tours I almost, I don't want to say avoid the big cities now, but I almost want to play a little bit outside of the Chicagos and the Detroits, just to play to these younger growing hungry scenes. A place like New York City or Chicago, those places have shows constantly and the interest is going to peter. It's not anybody's fault really, but if there is a show for three nights a week all the time, you are just going to get tired of going to show after show. If you hit some of these smaller towns, they really want the bands to come through and don't have these jaded, big-city attitudes either. They don't have a list of bands, that if you are not as good as these bands, they don't care. They know the bands that are thrown at them, the bands that are nice enough to stroll into their town and rock. That's what we try to do.

MRR: How can people get in touch with NO TIME LEFT?

Nick: thirdXparty@hotmail.com (Nick), urthedevil@hotmail.com (Joe), WhoGaveYou@aol.com, (Jerid), NoMansSlave@aol.com (Eric), FeedTheOctopus@yahoo.com (Adam).

Look out for the NO TIME LEFT 10" coming out on 625 very soon.

RIISTETYT

"Riistetyt was originally named Cadgers. It was formed in 1980 or 81. In 81 (in fall of the year) they made a split with Kaaos (PTEP 01). Line-up was Lateri - voc., Perry - gtr., Piise - b. and Stydy - dr. In spring of 1982 Perry left the Cadgers and formed a band called Järjestyshäiriö (they did one great demo-tape, on vocals was Kake from Kaaos). Raipe replace Perry in guitar and so band became Riistetyt. "Laki ja järjestys (Law and Order)" -ep (PTEP 03) came out in summer of 82. In fall of that year Piise left the Riistetyt (he was only 15 years old and he had something else) and Perry came back. The line-up: Lateri - voc., Perry - gtr., Raipe - b., Stydy - dr. They made the lp. "Valtion Vankina (As Prisoner of State)" (PRO 006), which came out in January 83. Then Raipe left and Piise came back to play bass. Next record was "Skitsofrenia" (PRO 018) 12" ep. It came out in spring of 1983. In that summer the line-up changed again, Piise and Stydy left on this time. New drummer and bass player was found from Kaaos, Jaska and me (Nappi). We were so fucking bored with Jakke. In October we made "Tuomiopäivä" -ep, which came out until 1991 (I don't know the reason for this). A month later we did the studiosection for "Nightmares in Darkness", it came out in next year (RRR 34). The live side on that album was recorded at Puntala festivals 83. After we were in studio Perry went to army and we had any guitarist. On that time we had the first Holy Dolls -project with Lateri. In December came Rike from Bastards to play guitar. He was very active to take care of gigs and other things of band but money was the only reason why he did all that. It became clear to me little bit later. Our Holy Dolls - project ispired him to form the Pyhät Nuket to addition for Riistetyt. We did with Riistetyt further one record "Raiskattu Tulevaisuus" (RRR 44). It came out later 1984, much more later than I left the band. On covers of that album they only thanked me for playing bass on that record. Ok… that tells something about athmosphere in those days. I didn't get along with Rike, 'cos I noticed what kind of asshole he was. I left the band in April 84 and I formed the Kuolleet Kukat with Jakke. Riistetyt went to touring in USA in summer of that year. They had Make and Mika from TampereSS in guitar and bass there. I've heard that the music was only partically Riistetyt stuff in USA. Later they left Riistetyt completely and concentrated to Pyhät Nuket. We restarted the band for the funeral of Lepakko in Nov. 1999 (Lepakko was legendary gigplace in Helsinki which was originally squated in 1979 and demolished by the Nokia in 1999). The line-up was Lazze-voc, Rike-guitar, Timo-drums and me-bass. In the beginning of 2000 we put Rike away, 'cos he came so bossy (actually he was same kind of asshole like in 80's) and we others didn't get along with him. Now we tried with two guitarists, Raimo and Vege. With that line-up we made an EP. "Tervetuloa Kuolema (Welcome Death)" (FIGHT 030) and little bit later Timo and Raimo moved away from the band. Perttu came to drums and since that we've played with current line-up. On February 2002 came out the 3rd LP "Kuka Valehtelee? (Who's Lying?)" -FIGHT 036 (CD version came 3 months earlier from Brazil for our tour in there). Now we've a 10" - "Orjat ja Kurjat (Slaves and Miserables)". it's came out on this May (2003). Much more harder stuff than "Kuka Valehtelee". Next plan is touring again in Brazil on October 2003."

Introduction written by Nappi, takne from www.riistetyt.com

Interview by Joel Abrahamsson.

MRR: In Finland and Sweden, you are an old great Finnish band; do people see you like gods?
Vege: I think we're not so famous in Finland. I think we're more popular in Europe and in Brazil. When we were in Brazil...
MRR: Did they think you were punk gods? How does it feel that you've influenced so many bands?
Vege: Of course it's good.
MRR: What does RIISTETYT mean in English?
Vege: "Victims of exploitation."
MRR: Like standard porn?
Christoffer: No.
MRR: Is it something kinky?
Vege: No no. Like the Exploited.
MRR: Do you like the Exploited?
Vege: No.
MRR: How many lineup changes have you had?
Vege: Lazze, our singer, is the only original member. The rest of us have been playing in RIISTETYT since '83 or something. After '85 or something RIISTETYT split up, and in 2000 we started to play again. Now it's almost the same as when we started.
MRR: But when did RIISTETYT start?
Christoffer: It was-
Vege: '81.
Christoffer: '81.
MRR: Weren't you first called CADGERS?
Vege: Yeah, CADGERS was before RIISTETYT and CADGERS became RIISTETYT. They did a split 7" with KAAOS.
MRR: What other bands influence you nowadays?
Christoffer: SEPULTURA.
Vege: Some other bands. Some metal bands. Old bands like DISCHARGE.
Christoffer: New DISCHARGE is really great.
MRR: The best thing they've done in twenty years.
Vege: Or something like that...
MRR: Do you have any new gigs in front of you?
Vege: Actually now we don't have any big plans. Maybe next year we'll go to Brazil.
MRR: Again? What is it about Brazilians that they like you so much?
Vege: We have really good friends in Brazil and...
MRR: Is there a crazy audience?
Vege: Yeah.
Christoffer: Like in Finland?
Vege: And really nice girls.
Christoffer: Yeah.
MRR: Were you in the jungle?
Vege: No, just in towns. We are not Tarzans. (Laughter)
MRR: Yes, you are. (Laughter)
Vege: No, I don't have underpants like Tarzan. As you can see, these are black.
MRR: I bet you do when you're home.
Vege: Of course, but that's my private thing.

MRR: No, I want to talk about that (laughter).
Vege: You can to visit me (laughter).
MRR: What town do you come from?
Vege: Tampere. Tampere is hardcore city.
MRR: What do Finnish bands think about Sweden and the Swedish people? Are we total idiots or what? (Laughter)
Vege: I think Finland and Sweden have a love and hate relationship.
MRR: But I think that's more Sweden and Norway. Like Swedish people joke about Norwegian people, but not much about Finnish people.
Vege: Yeah, we hear lots of jokes about Swedish people. Not so much jokes about Danish people. Most Swedish jokes.
MRR: What's the punk scene like in Finland nowadays?
Vege: I think it's really good. Especially from Tampere there are really lots of good bands.
MRR: Is it a big town?
Vege: The second biggest town in Finland.
MRR: Are there any good bands from Helsinki?
Vege: Yeah, a lot good bands, but not as good as in Tampere.
Christoffer: The bands from Helsinki are not as good as the bands from Tampere.
MRR: What do you think about the Swedish scene?
Vege: Actually I don't know much about the Swedish scene.
MRR: Don't you much like any Swedish bands?
Vege: I think we'd only like to play two gigs here, two days here at the same place.
MRR: Do you like it here too?
Vege: Yeah, it was really great.
Christoffer: I like many Swedish punk bands.
MRR: ANTICIMEX?
Vege: You got a lot of good bands here.
Christoffer: SKITSLICKERS.
Vege: ANTICIMEX, SKITSLICKERS, EBBA GRÖN, WOLFPACK.
Christoffer: WOLFBRIGADE.
Vege: COUNTERBLAST.
MRR: Yeah, they're playing here next week.
Vege: WARCOLLAPSE. You got lot of good bands.
MRR: Do you like any music other than punk and metal music?
Vege: Yeah. Reggae.
MRR: And a fat joint? Are you much in to politics?
Vege: I think if want to live your life you don't always have be so serious. You have to have fun, but of course be political too.
MRR: Do you have any new releases coming up?
Christoffer: We will go to the studio in December. We are recording something like a 7". I'm not so sure but it'll maybe be out next spring.

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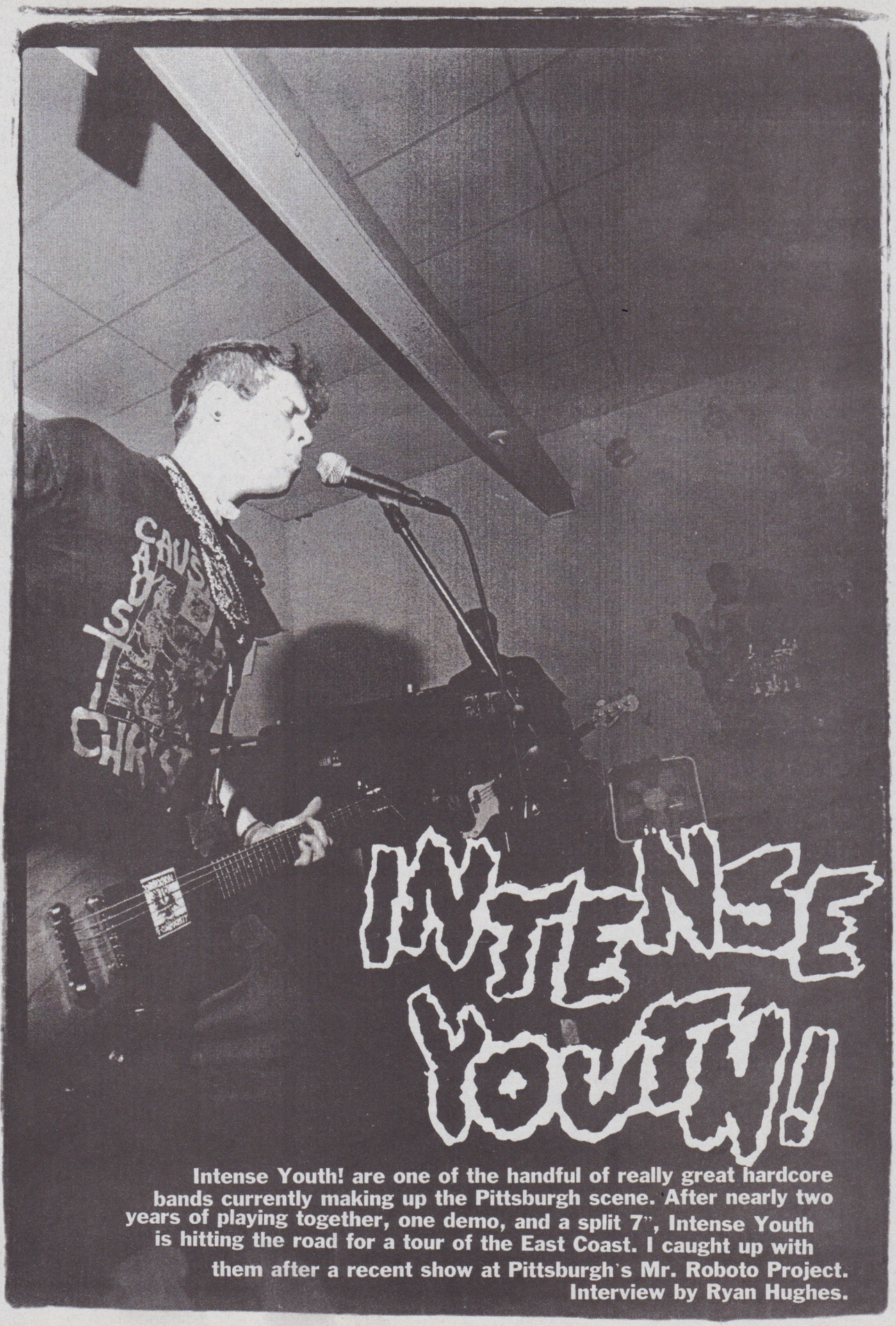

INTENSE YOUTH!

Intense Youth! are one of the handful of really great hardcore bands currently making up the Pittsburgh scene. After nearly two years of playing together, one demo, and a split 7", Intense Youth is hitting the road for a tour of the East Coast. I caught up with them after a recent show at Pittsburgh's Mr. Roboto Project.

Interview by Ryan Hughes.

MRR: Let's start out with who you are and what you do in the band.
Andy: I play guitar and sing.
Jeremy: I play bass and bellow.
Geoff: I play drums.
MRR: How did you guys hook up? Did you know each other before you started playing together?
Andy: I'd known Jeremy for several years before I moved back to Pittsburgh. Geoff moved here from out of town and was looking for a place to live. We met at a show and ended up living together. We both really wanted to start a band.
Jeremy: I just jumped on for the ride and…
Geoff: The wild ride!
Jeremy: Yea, this is what it resulted in.
MRR: Where did you move here from, Geoff?
Geoff: Illinois.
MRR: Why did you decide to move to Pittsburgh?
Geoff: Well, I wanted to move closer to the East Coast, and I wanted to move to a bigger city, but not a big city. I knew some people that lived in Pittsburgh and they suggested that I move here. I had been traveling for a while and I was getting tired of it. I wanted to…
Jeremy: He wanted to settle down and find a nice little suburban home.
Andy: He wanted to cultivate his beard.
Geoff: All those things and many more.
MRR: Andy, you said you moved back to Pittsburgh. Where were you living?
Andy: I lived in Cincinnati, where I had a brief experience with college. I missed Pittsburgh and I didn't have anything else to do. I figured the best thing to do would be to leave Cincinnati.
MRR: I can see why you left Cincinnati.
Andy: It is not a bad place; it's just pretty mediocre. There was some cool stuff going on there and there has been some real cool stuff happening since I left. I don't know if me leaving had something to do with that.
MRR: I was looking over some of the reviews of your demo and your split with Caustic Christ. I find the different bands reviewers use to draw a comparison to be pretty interesting…
Geoff: Yeah!
All: (Laughter)
MRR: Anything from Aus-rotten to Angel Hair to Balance of Terror. Are you comfortable with those comparisons? How would you describe yourselves?
Jeremy: I think it is weird, since none of our songs sound the same. We write one song and it may remind someone of Angel Hair. Our next song will sound completely different. One song leads to another, but none of them really tie together. So, if they all sound like different bands, then I can see why people are drawing those comparisons.
Andy: Someone said we sound like Toxic Narcotic; I've never even heard them. At least to me, I think all our songs have a similar feel to them; they feel like our songs. It just depends on what we've been listening to that week.
Geoff: So many different bands influence us; it's difficult to say, "We sound like this band." It's not that simple. We're drawing influences from different genres or sub-genres of punk. We're taking Discharge riffs and Screeching Weasel in the same song.
Jeremy: Discharge to Neurosis.
Andy: I think there have been times when I'd say, "Dude, let's just put a 7 Seconds part in there." Sometimes when we are practicing, we'll finish playing a song we've been playing for a couple months, and I'll be say, "How the hell did we come up with this?"
Geoff: Even when we intentionally try to put something into a song that we've been influenced by, most of the time it doesn't sound anything like it is supposed to.
Andy: Especially with my junky guitar playing.
Geoff: On all the flyers for local shows, no one even attempts to describe what we sound like. It is just a string of words that mean nothing.
Andy: What were we described as on one flyer? "Destructo-punk?" That doesn't even describe the music.
Geoff: When Andy and I first started, we just wanted to have fun. We wanted to start a band that sounded like Social Distortion.
Andy: We don't sound like Social Distortion and we are not having fun any more. It looks like we failed on both counts.
Geoff: I thought we'd just screw around and have fun and see what happened.
MRR: Are the three of you coming from different musical influences and bringing them all together?
Geoff: Andy likes…
Jeremy: Pop punk.
Geoff: I think it is because Andy likes Uniform Choice more than he likes Minor Threat.
Andy: I do. I like the second Uniform Choice record and I think the first one is a better Minor Threat album. We're not going to argue about that.
Jeremy: Geoff likes Fleas and Lice a lot.
MRR: How long have you guys been playing together?
Andy: Geoff and I have been playing together for about a year.
Geoff: We started playing at the end of September, I think.
Andy: Yeah, so that's…
Geoff: Since September, 2001.
Andy: Jeremy, when did you start playing with us?
Jeremy: The end of that November.
Geoff: You started after the Social Distortion attempt failed.
Jeremy: I started when we decided to be an 80s skate-punk band.
Andy: Did we? I don't even know. I said it before and I'll say it again. What we sound like is what we're intending to sound like.
MRR: A lot of hardcore bands are moving away from talking about the ideas contained within their songs. I wanted to get your reaction to that. Why is it important to you that the audience understands what your songs are about?
Geoff: I like when bands talk about their songs. I've always thought the ideas expressed in songs were important. Living in the Chicago area, I had a lot of opportunities to see Crudos, who were a big influence on me. They used to talk about issues in their neighborhood and the things going on in the world. They always managed to make a good show a great show. It felt really complete. I've always liked going away from a show knowing more about the band, and I'd like to think that us talking about the ideas that we express in our lyrics is one way to give someone that.
Andy: When I buy a record, the first thing I go for is the lyric sheet. I want to know what's on the band's mind… what they're saying. I think it is really important as far as punk/hardcore goes. Growing up in Pittsburgh, you'd go see Aus-Rotten, who would play with all these bands who would talk about their lyrics or what they had on their minds as it related to the lyrics. It enhances the music a lot. The other thing is that occasionally someone will come up to you after the set, and it starts some form of dialogue.
Jeremy: There are a lot of people who come to shows and end up talking to you about what you said during your set, and that is cool. However, between the three of us, it's nice to write songs and explain what each of us thinks about it. One of us may have a different view than the other people in the band. For example, when we were putting a song together for a compilation and we started working on the summary, we discovered that the song meant something different to each of us. It sparked a dialogue between us. So on top of communicating to the audience, it gives us an opportunity to share ideas with each other.
Geoff: We don't repeat ourselves each time we play. When I try to explain a song, I try to do it through the lens of how I feel at that moment. Over time, our songs develop more meaning for us. The fact a song's meaning has grown the more we play it is pretty fulfilling to me.
Andy: All three of us write lyrics. By hearing their viewpoints, I learn more about them. If I show up with lyrics, we'll start talking about them, and maybe Geoff and Jeremy have a different take on the subject. It evolves and complements what I feel the song is about. I feel like it becomes a whole song once we talk about it at practice.
MRR: Are there certain ideas that you set out to address in your songs, or do they evolve out of personal experiences?
Andy: I think that as far as motivation, for me, it is political in nature, but based on the things that I observe in my day-to-day life, what I react to as I walk down the street. I observe things and wonder how it will impact my part of the world or the community that I'm a part of—I don't pull from any particular political ideology. A lot of lyrics deal with trying to gain some form of control of our environment and build something beyond it. "I live in a certain physical area and that's my community." To me, community is more people-oriented rather than a physical plot of land.
Geoff: I try to write from personal experience as a starting point to discussing some larger issue. A lot of what I write about deals with alienation and living in a commodity-based

society. The traditional things that hold people together are disappearing.

MRR: There seems to be a certain level of criticism, or at least critique of the punk community. Is it meant to be part of that continuing dialogue you mentioned earlier?

Jeremy: I think there are a lot of stereotypes with in punk, set beliefs… schemas that people believe in. Someone will meet a person who believes in something and can really communicate that idea, but soon enough it spreads to the level of catch phrases. There will be one idea everyone comes together around, but they don't really know anything about it. There is so much of that. The songs I write aren't really about telling people they are wrong, but about asking them to think about what they are saying. There doesn't seem to be a whole lot of thought behind the ideas, or if there is, a lot of people don't know about it.

Andy: Ideas get watered down and skewed.

Geoff: In a scene that is supposed to be about rebellion, there are a lot of people who just go with the flow, be it a musical style or a political belief. The danger in that is when those tastes or ideas start to be pushed

on people who may have a different outlook. People need to have their own beliefs and to respect that others may have a different opinion—we shouldn't try to force our perspective on others.

MRR: I want to ask you about your demo. It seems that a lot of bands put out a demo because it feels like something they have to do. In no time, they have a 7" out and it is the exact same recording that was on the demo. Your demo seems to have been meant to stand on its own. Can you talk about the work you guys did on the music and packaging?

Jeremy: When we recorded the demo, we didn't look at it as, "we're recording a demo." We were going to record and see what happened with it. The songs turned out really good, for the most part. It seemed like it was a separate recording in of itself, rather than a means to get shows out of town. A lot of people told us we should release it as our 7".

Andy: Geoff just pushing some knobs for five minutes beforehand.

Jeremy: It was a DIY recording. After we recorded it, we decided it was worth taking the time to put together a really nice booklet and to hand stamp each tape.

Andy: I consider it more of a tape release than an actual demo. We wanted it to be something special.

Jeremy: Because we're special.

Andy: We are! It seems weird to spend time writing songs and lyrics that mean something to us and just throw a few microphones in a corner and record it, then use that to represent what we sound like to other people. It seems like if we're going to put time and ourselves into a project, then we should try and get our point across as best we can through music, lyrics, and the package of the whole tape we put out

Geoff: Every band I've been in, I've always wanted to make sure that we we're doing the best we could do at that particular time. That is how I approached it. I wanted it to look nice and take time on all aspects of it. Being around (The) Roboto (Project), day-in and day-out you see tapes, CD-Rs, 7"s, LPs, and CDs. After a while it becomes a blur. You want what you do to at least…

Jeremy: Stand out.

Geoff: Yeah, or at least have some effort behind it, as opposed to a lot of stuff that is just a carbon copy of everything else. You can just tell that people don't care, they just want to get it out. Especially the CD-R demo. You can record it, write your name on it, and then send it out. It doesn't feel like anyone gives a shit. Before we recorded, I looked at it this way: if it turns out really crappy we'll just send it out to people to get shows, as a way to say, "This is what we sound like." We won't sell it or give it away. It ended up sounding pretty good, and I thought maybe people who had already heard us might want to have a copy. And if we're going to release it, we should make sure it looks nice, and isn't just another tape to add to the pile.

Andy: It is a good thing to have some type of recording, no matter what the quality, and a sheet of typed-out lyrics, just as a way to connect with other people. I wanted to make sure we had was a way to explain what we were thinking and feeling as we wrote each song. We wanted to have

a pretty intense booklet.
Jeremy: Intense Youth's Intense Booklet.
Andy: What some might call the Intense Package.
Geoff: A lot of things fell into place. My friend Mary is a great artist and was really into the band and she wanted to help out. I had some ideas for the charts and stuff for the booklet so we put it all together. We also had a hook up at Office Max—two-color copies for free.
MRR: What are some of the other projects you're involved in?
Andy: What projects am I involved in?
MRR: Your fucking label, stupid.
Andy: Oh yeah, man, that's right! I thought you meant art projects or baking projects. I do a label called Behold, The Youthquake! Records. I've only done two releases thus far, soon to be three after we record. The story behind the label is that I was living in Cincinnati and was going to put out a record for a friend's band that I was really into, which was The Awakening. A friend of mine from Philadelphia and I were going to put it out as a joint effort. I guess chronic unemployment hindered him from helping with the project. When it came down to it I really wanted to put the record out. Ever since I got their demo I listened to it all the time. When they went into record their first 7" they had mentioned that they would like to re-record some of the songs from the demo that they really liked. The recordings were pretty good on the demo but they wanted them to be a better quality. So, that was the first release. It was definitely an experience. From that release I was able to build up a distro and trade records with people from Sweden, Czechoslovakia, and Germany. To see that there is this global punk rock community that you can be a part of is really great. As far as our split with Caustic Christ, I wanted to do something with them since they were one of my favorite local bands. We had played a bunch of shows together and thought it would be great to work together,
MRR: **How important is it that you release your own music? Would you be willing to let another label release a record?**
Andy: Personally, I'd want to release my own music. We put 100% of ourselves into our music; I would want to be the one who makes sure our music gets out there. It isn't really a control issue; it is more an issue that it is our music and I would want one of us to be the one to be the one to release.
Geoff: For me, I'm pretty anti-music industry. Even within punk we can get into aspects of that culture. Where people you don't know are willing to release your records, that has always been really weird to me. It seems really weird to be signed or work with someone you don't really know. We might do a split 7" with a local band, Krooked Grind, on the Hard Travelin' label run by our friend Q. He's from Pittsburgh and a really good friend of ours that we trust. Beyond that I don't want to venture.
Andy: From putting out a 7", I know that you have to sign a legal release when you get records mastered and pressed. You end up owning the rights to the recording. If you're the band, there is always a chance that you'll get screwed over. If someone trusts me to put out their record, then that is awesome. If I trust someone like that, then I would let them to do a record for us.
Geoff: To me punk has always been a real personal community, and I hate to see it become so alienated that you are reduced to working with people who are just out there releasing records.
MRR: Geoff, you went on tour with a group of artists last summer. What did that involve?
Geoff: My friend Mary and I did this tour called the Slag Heaps Are Sprouting which was a collection of print art and zines from Pittsburgh. We took it to the Underground Publishing Conference and the Portland Zine Symposium. Along the way, we did a series shows to and from Portland. We did five on the way there and four on the way back. I saw a lot of people in the punk scene doing art that no one else was seeing. I was also inspired by a lot of books on the early punk scenes. One in particular was the *Dance of Days*, where Ian MacKaye saw punk as being very regional. I liked the idea of doing a tour of Pittsburgh artists to show people the type of art being generated by people in this city. I'm really interested in expanding punk culture into other forms of creativity.
MRR: What about you, Jeremy?
Jeremy: I do the booking for the Mr. Roboto Project.
Geoff: How is that?
Jeremy: It is cool, but it can be trying when you get 60 email messages a day. I can only check it at work, so it is a way to kill two hours of work. It gets frustrating when you get emails that read, "So and so is on CMJ's top 200 and seeing them live will change your life. They blend an exciting mix of nu-metal, rap and the hardest elements of punk to give you a brand new, unique sound that will blow your socks off."
Andy: Geoff doesn't wear socks!
Jeremy: Geoff's wearing pink socks right now.
Andy: When I lived with him those things didn't exist.
MRR: So you've managed to get a salary out of booking shows at Roboto.
Jeremy: Yeah, getting paid by the University of Pittsburgh to book shows.
Andy: I'm not going to say where I work but I do some of the label business at work as well.
MRR: Geoff brought up the idea of promoting the Pittsburgh punk scene. Is there anything that you want to say about the current scene?
Geoff: Don't move here.
Andy: I think it is pretty sweet, but don't move here.
Geoff: It's full!
Andy: No vacancies! There were three years that I didn't live here, so I can't comment on that era but…
Jeremy: Those three years weren't that good. I've lived here my whole life; I started going to shows when I was fifteen or sixteen and there were a few good bands that were real good, but it wasn't until the advent of Roboto that the scene has gotten a lot better. There are a lot of bands, and not just punk bands, which are doing a lot of crazy stuff. Bands like Conelrad who are doing really insane shit.
Andy: As far as the bands and stuff now, it seems like everyone who is in bands is real tight and even the shows feel like you're hanging out with a family. It's not like a gang where we are all wearing basketball jerseys. It seems more of a connection on a personal level rather than going to a show to watch shirtless dudes beat the shit out of each other. The cool thing is that other kids who may not be into the scene at Roboto are now starting their own spaces. I can't think of any other city where there are two independent membership venues run by people in the scene. Even if people are complaining that a certain part of the scene is not their thing, at least they're getting off their asses and doing something about it. Probably the best way to describe the scene is just a bunch of wingnuts. What are some antics that go on at shows?
Jeremy: The Thrash Pyramid.
Jeremy: How about when Eric and Corey put masks on top of Billy from Tragedy's head during their set?
Andy: Yeah, people jumping off ladders. No one has ever been hurt, except for "West Nile" Steve hurting himself because he's uncoordinated.
MRR: He did get hit in the head with a camera.
Geoff: That guy got chased out of the scene.
Andy: Yeah…with a 2x4. I don't know what happened. Rumor has it I was patrolling the streets with a 2x4.
MRR: Anything you want to mention before we close this up?
Geoff: We're touring.
Andy: Where is it, Geoff? It's an eastern, Midwest, Northern, South…
Geoff: East of the Mississippi…
(Intense Youth! demonstrates how geographically challenged they are as they argue over what cities are east of the Mississippi.)
Andy: It will last about two weeks….

Discography:
Already out, and still available:
7-song cassette (self-released) May 2002
Split 7" with Caustic Christ (Behold, The Youthquake!) December 2002
Out soon:
"Lure of the City" on Big Idea benefit compilation May 2003
4 song 7" (Behold, The Youthquake!) May/June 2003

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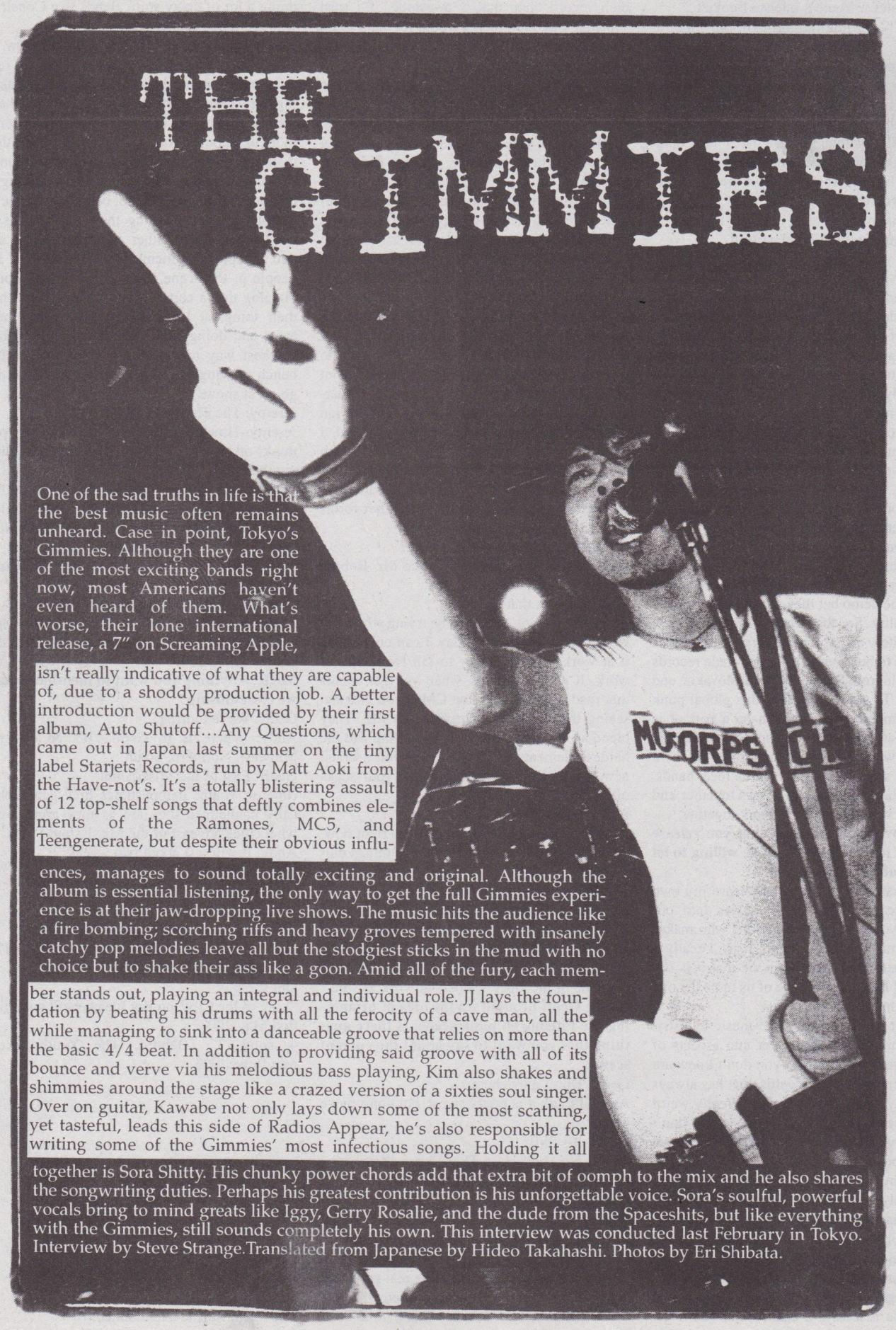
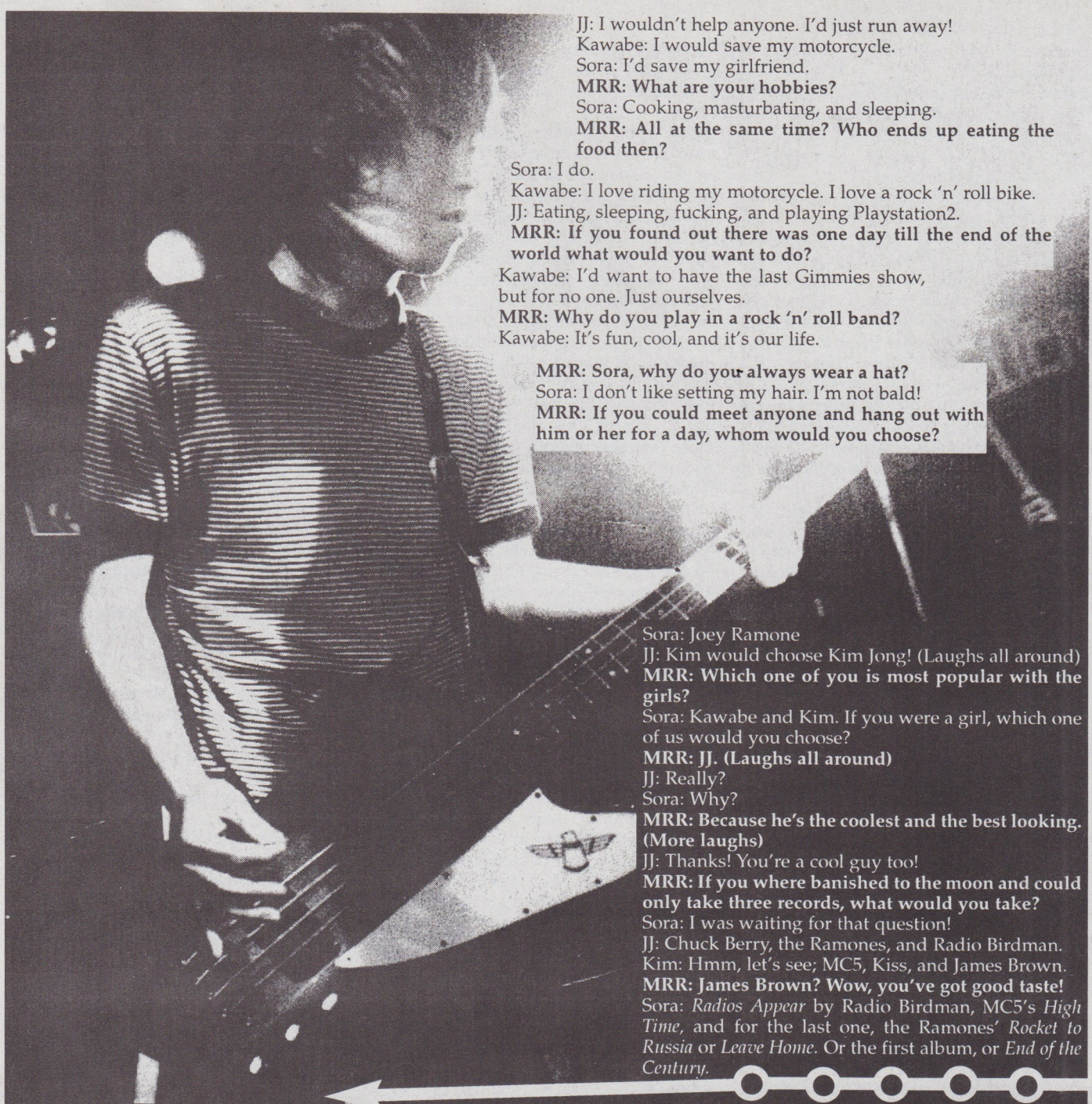
THE GIMMIES



One of the sad truths in life is that the best music often remains unheard. Case in point, Tokyo's Gimmies. Although they are one of the most exciting bands right now, most Americans haven't even heard of them. What's worse, their lone international release, a 7" on Screaming Apple, isn't really indicative of what they are capable of, due to a shoddy production job. A better introduction would be provided by their first album, Auto Shutoff...Any Questions, which came out in Japan last summer on the tiny label Starjets Records, run by Matt Aoki from the Have-not's. It's a totally blistering assault of 12 top-shelf songs that deftly combines elements of the Ramones, MC5, and Teengenerate, but despite their obvious influences, manages to sound totally exciting and original. Although the album is essential listening, the only way to get the full Gimmies experience is at their jaw-dropping live shows. The music hits the audience like a fire bombing; scorching riffs and heavy groves tempered with insanely catchy pop melodies leave all but the stodgiest sticks in the mud with no choice but to shake their ass like a goon. Amid all of the fury, each member stands out, playing an integral and individual role. JJ lays the foundation by beating his drums with all the ferocity of a cave man, all the while managing to sink into a danceable groove that relies on more than the basic 4/4 beat. In addition to providing said groove with all of its bounce and verve via his melodious bass playing, Kim also shakes and shimmies around the stage like a crazed version of a sixties soul singer. Over on guitar, Kawabe not only lays down some of the most scathing, yet tasteful, leads this side of Radios Appear, he's also responsible for writing some of the Gimmies' most infectious songs. Holding it all together is Sora Shitty. His chunky power chords add that extra bit of oomph to the mix and he also shares the songwriting duties. Perhaps his greatest contribution is his unforgettable voice. Sora's soulful, powerful vocals bring to mind greats like Iggy, Gerry Rosalie, and the dude from the Spaceshits, but like everything with the Gimmies, still sounds completely his own. This interview was conducted last February in Tokyo. Interview by Steve Strange.Translated from Japanese by Hideo Takahashi. Photos by Eri Shibata.

MRR: How did you become interested in rock 'n' roll while living in Hokkaido?
Sora: There were no stores selling rock 'n' roll records on vinyl, but we saw CDs there. Three of us went to the same high school and we started listening to American music together.
Kawabe: Around seven years ago, when we where juniors or seniors in high school there was a popular underground garage scene in Tokyo. We started listening to bands like Teengenerate, Registrators, Devil Dogs, and Rip Offs. We where getting these things by mail order. We used to order them together so the shipping was cheaper. That was the beginning. We were trying to get rare things we couldn't buy in Hokkaido. We enjoyed listening to those records a lot at the time. Now we listen to some of them and don't think they are so good, but it was fun at the time.
Sora: When we were starting out, we liked things like the Ramones and Stooges. We thought they were really cool. We bought them because we had heard their names before. We started a band while we where in Hokkaido, but then we came to Tokyo to go to school. Some of us went to university and others to art school.
Kawabe: The only people in the band now that have been in it from the beginning are Sora and me.
MRR: Are you one of the youngest bands in Tokyo?
Sora: We are the youngest band that actually plays shows and makes records.
MRR: You told me earlier that rock 'n' roll is for young people, why?
Sora: It isn't that old people can't play rock 'n' roll. We think just think that rock should be flexible, but it is becoming more for only rock 'n' roll maniacs. That is what the scene in Tokyo is like. People are just interested in obscure Killed-by-Death-type music.
MRR: Do you think it's important to have a job outside your band?
Sora: I don't think so. We just have to have jobs to live. If we didn't have money we couldn't buy guitar strings and a practice space. It's just that if you don't have money you won't be able to do music. It's good to have some money. I don't think it's a bad idea to make a living off of music, but it's impossible in Japan. Only a few bands like Guitar Wolf can play punk rock and do that here.
MRR: Is it easy to play shows in Tokyo?
Kawabe: It's easy to get shows in Tokyo, but you need money. In Tokyo clubs are business first. If you don't mind paying the club owners money anyone can play shows in Tokyo. You have to be willing to lose money though. It's much harder to make good music here than it is to play a show. Music venues in Tokyo are like a stepping-stone for major labels. Lots of kids like those pre-major bands, but we don't belong to that scene. If more kids listened to genuine music it might change the situation. But that probably won't happen. Maybe we can change it, little by little.
MRR: Your 7"s where pretty good, but your album was amazing. How did you improve so much so fast?
Sora: When we released our singles, we just wanted to be a cool garage punk band. We weren't seriously thinking about what we where doing. When we were recording our first full length we weren't thinking about trying to be punk or garage or anything like that. We just wanted to be a good band. Americans might think this is weird, but we started listening to not just punk rock, but stuff like Zeppelin. Recently we've been listening to lots of Queen. I think there are more Japanese people who listen harder and more carefully to music than most Americans do. Japanese don't just listen to punk rock; they try to find the punk rock in rock music.
MRR: A lot of bands who are influenced by the MC5 are really boring imitations. You guys also show some MC5 influence, but you write great songs. Describe your songwriting process. Are lyrics important to you?
Kawabe: Definitely. Including lyrics is part of music; music and lyrics together make a song. We want both of them to be good. We try to make whatever we create good, whether or not it will sell.
Sora: Those bands that sound like MC5 only care about sounding like the MC5, but we look at them and many other bands as well. Imitation bands only look at the MC5's more garage rock stuff. There are some MC5 songs they don't like, but we like all the songs by them.
Kawabe: I don't think any good bands focus on just riffs. In addition to riffs you need a good melody line. We think melody is very important. Sora and I used to write all the songs individually, but now everyone makes comments on what we write, so we are moving to where everyone collaborates on our songs.
MRR: Your song "Dirty Trick" is about a bad review. When you read bad reviews do you actually get angry?
Sora: Yeah, of course. "Dirty Trick" is a song for a certain scumbag writer. I don't care about it now, but someone wrote that we where not a very good band, and I got angry with him.
MRR: Do you have more new songs?
Sora: Of course, three or four. We can't speak English that well, but we write lyrics in English. Even though we aren't fluent we still want our lyrics to be good.
MRR: Your album is only out in here in Japan, right?
Sora: Our label's distribution is really bad, so it's barely out here! If there are any good distributors in America reading this, please get in touch with us! We are going to be self-releasing a single or a 10" later this year.
MRR: Are you planning to put your first album out on an international label?
Sora: We've talked to Screaming Apple, but our label's boss said we need to sell more in Japan first. When an imported version of an album comes to Japan, people will buy those rather than the Japanese version, because they are much cheaper. We would really like to release it on Screaming Apple.
MRR: Do you think there is a difference between Japanese and American bands?
Sora: I think they are different. In the early 90s, there were many good bands in America, like the Devil Dogs and Rip Offs. But now, this is just my thinking, many American bands copy good bands from the early 90s or late 70s. I think it's better here in Japan. I always want to make my own thing. I don't want to play just a 70s, 80s, or early 90s style. I want our own style.
MRR: Do you want to play in America?
Sora: Of course. If someone invites us we will go there. Even though it would be really expensive, we still want to go to the US. We just can't do it now because we are poor.
Kawabe: Our dream is to play in the US or Australia.
MRR: In the collage in the CD booklet there is a guy with his pants down. Who is it?
JJ: Me. I was drunk when the picture was taken.
MRR: You guys like to drink?
All: Yeah.
Sora: Except for Kim, he is the Gimmies most important driver.
Kim: I'm the sober cab.
MRR: What is the best show you've played?
Sora: It hasn't happened yet. Probably our last show will be the best one.
MRR: If there is a girl who you have a crush on, how do you approach her and let her know?
Sora: I make a phone call every night.
MRR: Like a stalker?
Sora: Stalker is love.
All: (laughs)
Kawabe: I love to drink so I will ask her to go drinking. I wouldn't date a girl who doesn't drink. I'm gonna see if we have fun drinking together first.
Kim: First I talk to her a lot and then cool off for a while and leave here alone. Then I will wait. I approach and retreat until she figures it out.
MRR: Does that work?
Kim: Maybe.
JJ: I'll sleep with her first then think about dating her.
MRR: What do you do next?
JJ: If that works, then I'll sleep with her again.
MRR: If you had had to fight off an alien invasion, whom would you choose to help you and whom would you save?



JJ: I wouldn't help anyone. I'd just run away!
Kawabe: I would save my motorcycle.
Sora: I'd save my girlfriend.
MRR: What are your hobbies?
Sora: Cooking, masturbating, and sleeping.
MRR: All at the same time? Who ends up eating the food then?
Sora: I do.
Kawabe: I love riding my motorcycle. I love a rock 'n' roll bike.
JJ: Eating, sleeping, fucking, and playing Playstation2.
MRR: If you found out there was one day till the end of the world what would you want to do?
Kawabe: I'd want to have the last Gimmies show, but for no one. Just ourselves.
MRR: Why do you play in a rock 'n' roll band?
Kawabe: It's fun, cool, and it's our life.

MRR: Sora, why do you always wear a hat?
Sora: I don't like setting my hair. I'm not bald!
MRR: If you could meet anyone and hang out with him or her for a day, whom would you choose?
Sora: Joey Ramone
JJ: Kim would choose Kim Jong! (Laughs all around)
MRR: Which one of you is most popular with the girls?
Sora: Kawabe and Kim. If you were a girl, which one of us would you choose?
MRR: JJ. (Laughs all around)
JJ: Really?
Sora: Why?
MRR: Because he's the coolest and the best looking. (More laughs)
JJ: Thanks! You're a cool guy too!
MRR: If you where banished to the moon and could only take three records, what would you take?
Sora: I was waiting for that question!
JJ: Chuck Berry, the Ramones, and Radio Birdman.
Kim: Hmm, let's see; MC5, Kiss, and James Brown.
MRR: James Brown? Wow, you've got good taste!
Sora: *Radios Appear* by Radio Birdman, MC5's *High Time*, and for the last one, the Ramones' *Rocket to Russia* or *Leave Home*. Or the first album, or *End of the Century*.

MRR: You'd really choose *End of the Century*?
Sora: I love the Ramones so much that every album is my favorite.
Kawabe: My first two would be the same as Sora's first two. For the third I'd choose *Beatles For Sale*.
MRR: If there was a fight between Fred Sonic Smith and Dee Dee Ramone who would win?
Sora: Dee Dee Ramone. He knew karate. Dee Dee also moved around more on stage because he had more energy. He was sharper. If Fred Sonic Smith had a gun, then Dee Dee would use a machine gun.
MRR: Describe your shittiest day ever.
Sora: One time when I was 19, I was really fucking drunk. I was at my old home and I was peeping in the window of the house next door. In the next house there lived this girl that I wanted to see. When I was peeping she was naked. She noticed me peeping and then she called the police! So then I drank more whiskey so I'd be really drunk and have a better excuse. (Laughs all around)
Kawabe: When we where recording the first album, I was taking my motorcycle to the studio and I had an accident. I had to go to the hospital, and my motorcycle was destroyed.
Kim: I got caught speeding and had to pay like 700 dollars.
JJ: My shittiest day was when my ex-girlfriend, who I really liked, dumped me. Not only that, but then I had to walk like 30 kilometers without shoes on to get home from her house. All I had that day were sandals and I threw them away.
MRR: Do you think you will still be playing rock 'n' roll when you are older?
Sora: Of course! I hope to keep playing, but I want to be like the Lazy Cowgirls, not the Rolling Stones.
Kawabe: I will love rock 'n' roll until I die, but I don't know if I will still be playing in 20 years. When I get older I might be bald and fat, and I'd look silly playing rock 'n' roll then. Just like the Rolling Stones look now.

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www.gimmies.net

ASS-END OFFEND

INTERVIEW BY LOINSPURT

From the wilds of Montana bursts forth four jerks playing some of the best hardcore punk to emerge out of the Big Sky State. With three 7"s and multiple tours under their belt, they are ready to leave their unabomber shacks and conquer the world Montucky style...

Ass End Offend is: Tom- Bass; Dan-Drums; Brent and Matt on their respective guitars. Formed on a cloudy day in '99, Matt was added as second Guitarist around six months ago.

MRR: Matt, what made you want to join this band?

Matt: Apart from the threats being made toward me if I didn't join, the other band I was in, the Anti Difrancos, was gonna quit. So what else was I gonna do?

MRR: What are your goals for the upcoming year?

Tom: Well, we plan on gittin 'er done.

Matt: To watch as many skinheads beat the crap out of each other as we can.

Tom: Start talking more shit to Missoula people, and put out more records.

Brent: To listen less and be more judgmental.

MRR: You guys have been talking about setting up an all-ages space. Is that still on the agenda?

Tom: The guy who runs the art gallery where we practice was talking about doing all-ages shows there.

Brent: The all-ages space thing is an entire lecture in itself. I mean, just why they don't work here, why Jay's, this local bar, is the problem, and why the Higgins Hall made it worse. It was nice that there was an all-ages place. But in a lot of ways, it made it worse because there was no drive to try anything anymore.

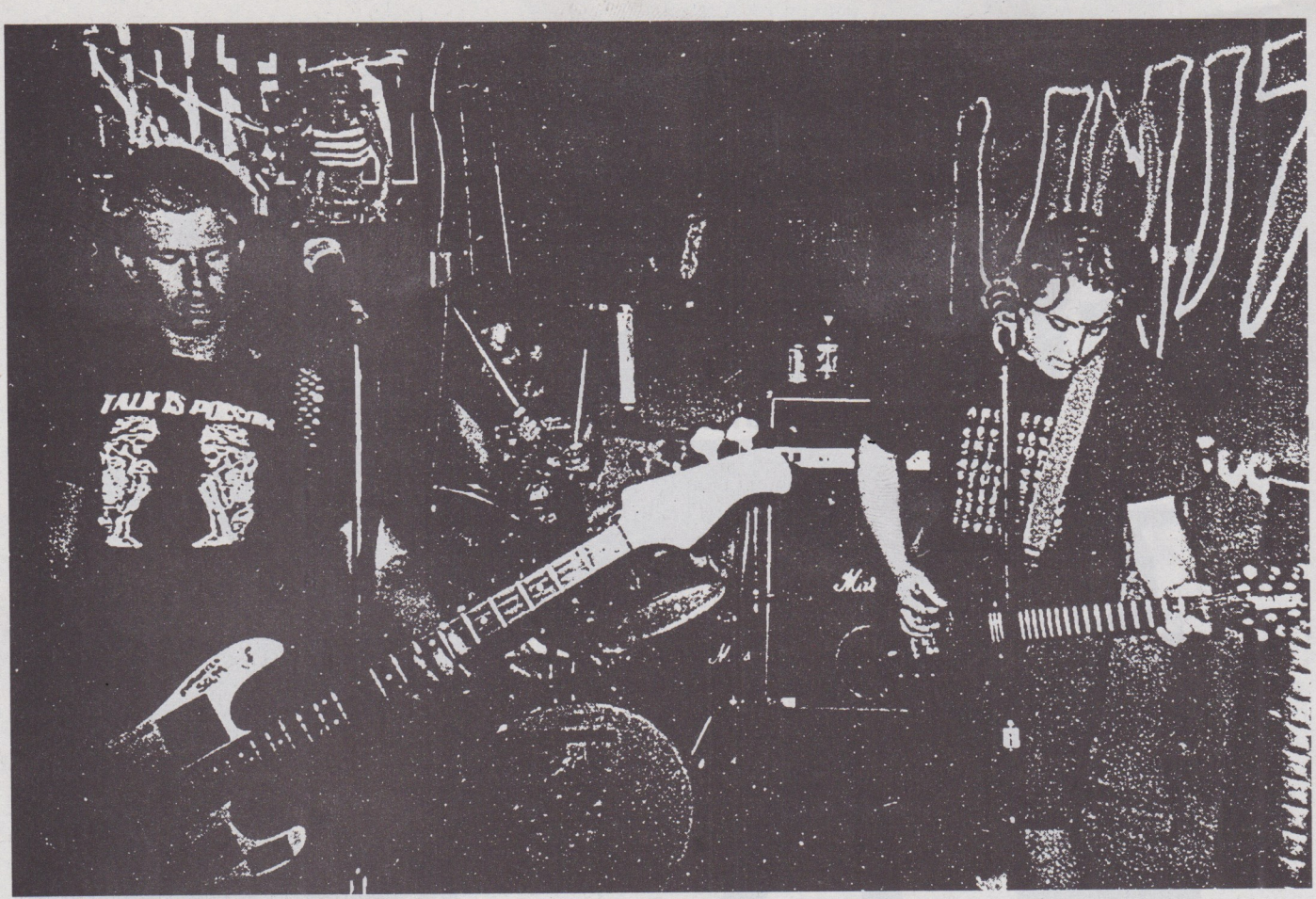
Dan: It really is just a matter of who's going to show enthusiasm. It's hard to get people off their asses.

MRR: Does that describe the Missoula music scene in general?

Tom: I think since Matt's lived here the longest he'd be the one to ask. Matt: We had the Union Hall shows, the White Birch House shows, and the Humpy House shows. To me, those were the good shows, ones that felt like they actually meant something. Now those places don't have shows.

Brent: There's the Higgins Hall.

Matt: Well, Yeah I guess one of the main reasons there aren't any more Union Hall shows is that Higgins Hall—a Boys and Girls Club—opened up, and every-



thing there is done for you. Even the person with the job of setting up shows doesn't really have to do anything, so the bands just show up and play and everyone just stands around and picks their ass. Brent: And then people come on my website and complain that nobody is into it.

Tom: A lot of the punk bands like the Sputniks and Humpy aren't around anymore. There are different groups and types of music that are going on, but all of them kinda aim at the Jay's crowd, they're all above 21.

Dan: No one is really trying to do anything else besides what's already done for them, which is just crap.

Brent: It's harder to do house shows in a college town too, because everybody drinks beer. I'm not saying that's good, I'm just saying everybody drinks beer, so if you're gonna have a house show you're gonna have beer and you're not gonna have house shows after awhile. That seems to be the biggest problem with all-ages shows, people feel like they have to have alcohol at the shows.

Matt: Speaking of a lot of bands and where they want to go with what they're doing, the motive for most males to be in a band is for the sole purpose of getting up there and stroking their own ego. That's my view of the reason why a lot of women aren't in bands in this town. The only female band that's in the realm of rock 'n' roll and punk rock would be Sasshole. Also, it's seen as a patriarchical and a hierarchical. If you're in a band or do a zine or whatever, you get respect you normally wouldn't get. Men are treated like heroes. And when women play in a band here they get eye-fucked by most of the men, instead of being taken seriously. Talk about discouragement.

Brent: How many girl bands have there been? There's Spanker.

Matt: They're not a band anymore. There's only been a couple really.

MRR: So ultimately, when you look at all the shit going on in the world, how important is the shit you guys are putting so much energy into? What's the importance of music as a means of transferring ideas? Is there really anything to be communicated, or is it just a bunch of egotists driving around the country, wasting gas and making a racket? Justify your existence!

Brent: Yes, we are wasting our time. Next question. (Hearty guffaws).

MRR: Gotcha, there's gotta be some humor in it all.

Tom: That's where the name Ass End Offend comes into play. It kinda humors our pessimistic lyrics.

Dan: I think we all understand how important it is to laugh at ourselves and what we do. It *is* driving around the country sucking gas, making ourselves deaf, but we enjoy it for all its aspects.

Matt: And we're not "shit-punk", we're "crap-core"!

MRR: What are some high and low points of living in Montana? Tom: The wilderness and getting out, all that fun stuff.

Dan: Winters tend to be long and gray.

Matt: The low population, not having to put up with other ugly fucking human beings, is good.

Tom: The population of the state being under a million people is nice.

MRR: Being a misanthrope and all—

Matt: People are only good cut into little pieces...

Brent: Even complaining about music though, Missoula does have sort of a good music scene. When I moved here I didn't think I'd ever be in a band again and this is better than anything I had before.

MRR: What are some of the cultural

idiosyncrasies of the area?
Brent: People call cash registers "tills" and bags "sacks." And it's not a damn pop; it's a *soda!* Damn inbred hill folk.
MRR: What other activities are you guys involved in?
Dan: Skateboarding!
Tom: Yeah definitely skateboarding, mountain-bike riding-
Brent: Is this the part where I act egotistical and mention my website? I do a website on Montana punk, and people argue on it. I'd like to say I built a little community but it's really just a bunch of ingrates arguing with each other.
Matt: Aside from skateboarding and loathing myself I do a distro/label called Poisoned Candy Records. We'll put out anything from Montana that's good HC, Punk, or whatever you want to call it, anything that is decent.
MRR: Do you try to focus on Montana stuff for distribution, then?
Matt: I've done a lot of trades with other labels from all over the place.

I think the reason I even started it was just a way to get out the bands I was in, get that music out, and help other bands. We are very secluded here so it's hard to present what you're doing to the rest of the world.
MRR: What's it like balancing touring with parenting responsibilities?
Brent: It's easy for me 'cause my daughter visits her mom in the summer when we go tour.
Matt: It's the same with me. The mom and I have split custody. We get along pretty well, so we're able to put up with each other's schedules.
MRR: What kind of values do you try to instill in your kids?
Brent: I told my daughter I was a crazy liberal and she went and told all her friends in school.
Matt: My daughter asked her daycare lady why their flags were all upside down, and they had to explain to her—you get the idea.
MRR: Would you buy them a Brittany Spears album if they wanted one?
Brent: Sadly, I did.
Matt: I would change the subject quickly as possible.
Brent: I hate to say it but kids need to make their own choices on that stuff.
Tom: Not like looking like a fucking Barbie doll though!
Matt: Yeah, I'd rather my daughter went through that stage now rather than later in life when boys her age have learned how to take advantage of girls. Self respect, self-discipline, and respect for others are a must, that should go without saying.
Brent: My parents wouldn't let me listen to the music I wanted to and I don't see why I should do that to her even if I deem it crap.
Matt: I grew up on Quiet Riot and Motley Crue, so-
Brent: The first album I ever bought was Def Leppard's *Pyromania.*
Tom: You guys are gonna kick me out of the band, but I listened to Bon Jovi for a period of time.
Dan: Yeah, Tom is kicked out.
MRR: What arena rock shows have you been to?
Tom: Oh, Oh, I saw Kiss reunion.
Brent: The only arena show I've been to was the Cure. Definitely don't include that in the interview.
Matt: There was Metallica's *And Justice For All* tour. Oh and then there was Blue Oyster Cult at the Great Falls fair; there were about 30 people there. Yeehaw.
Brent: Can you please note that Brent is giving Matt a standing ovation?
MRR: Upcoming releases?
Brent: We're working on a 7" and after that we're gonna work on putting together a full-length LP, hopefully it'll be out by spring.
Matt: I was gonna do an eight-track and some reel-to-reels. Brent is doing little floppy disks of one of our songs. I'd like to do a 13" LP. And we're going on tour this summer. I can't wait to get the hell out of here!
MRR: Where did the artwork for the Anti Difrancos/Ass End Offend *Imperialist Hard-on* 7" come from?
Matt: The photo on the front was taken by my grandpa during WWII, while he was in the Philippines. It's an American soldier holding an enemy's head. I guess to explain the title of that, *My Imperialist Hard-On is Bigger Than Yours,* my grandma talks about WWII, saying, "If we hadn't gotten into that war we'd be ruled by an imperialist government right now." But if you think about things, an imperialist government really is ruling us. Imperialism, by definition, is the control of as much land as possible, taking out anyone who gets in the way, including children. There ya go.

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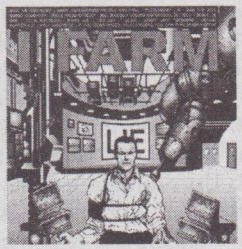

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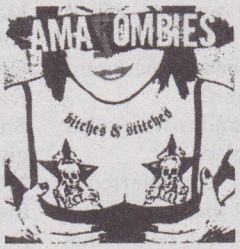

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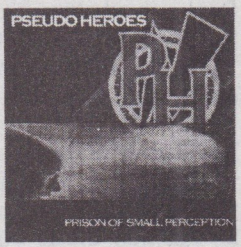

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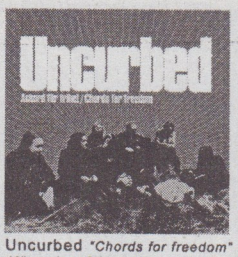

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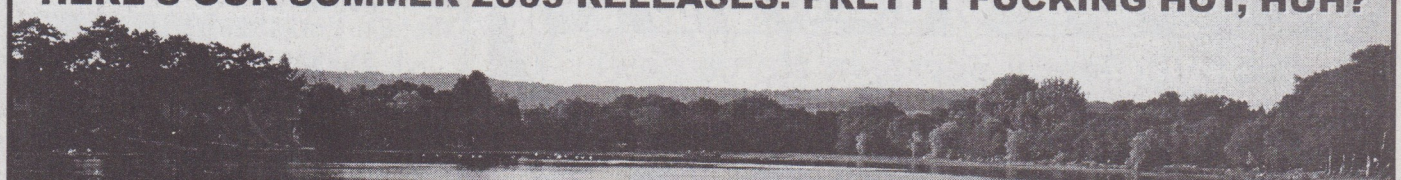

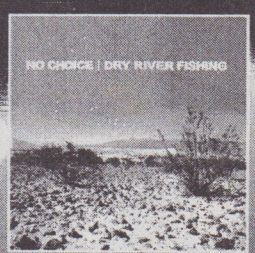

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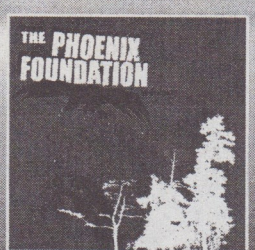

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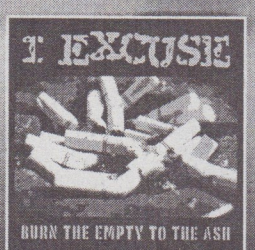

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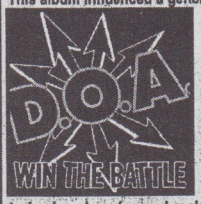

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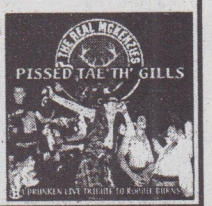

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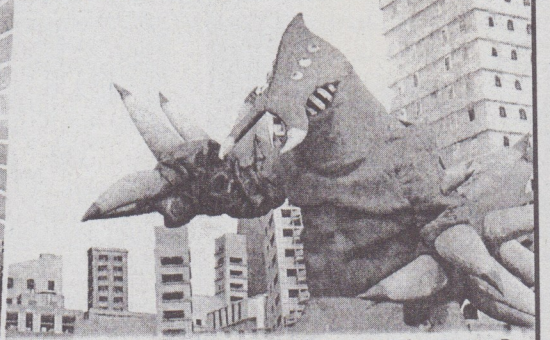

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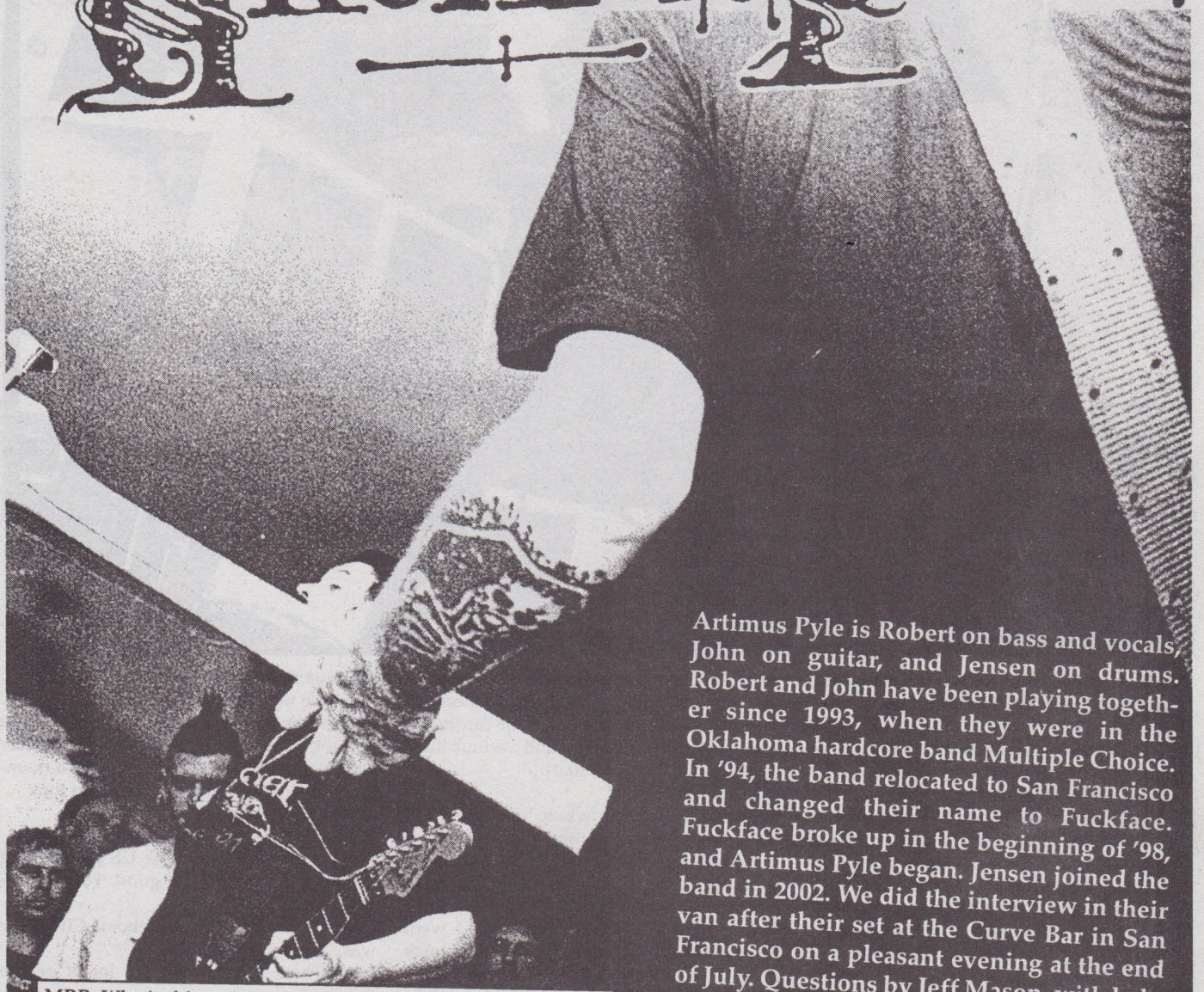
Artimus Pyle



Artimus Pyle is Robert on bass and vocals, John on guitar, and Jensen on drums. Robert and John have been playing together since 1993, when they were in the Oklahoma hardcore band Multiple Choice. In '94, the band relocated to San Francisco and changed their name to Fuckface. Fuckface broke up in the beginning of '98, and Artimus Pyle began. Jensen joined the band in 2002. We did the interview in their van after their set at the Curve Bar in San Francisco on a pleasant evening at the end of July. Questions by Jeff Mason, with help from Patsy and Karoline. Photos by Tommy Duffin.

MRR: Who is this guy, Artimus Pyle, and why did you name the band after him?

Robert: Artimus Pyle is the second drummer for the classic rock band Lynryd Skynyrd.

John: Are they classic rock? Or Southern rock?

Robert: Southern rock. Excuse me. We named the band after him for a bunch of reasons, but none of them really very good. It just sounds good. He's a badass drummer, he's vegetarian...

MRR: His picture looks good on the back of the record (the first seven).

Robert: He looks tough as hell. And when Lynryd Skynyrd's plane crashed in Mississippi, in 1977, he was the one who hiked through the swamp, trudged his way to get help for his bandmates. When he finally found a farmer's house, his guts were falling out, he wanted to come in and use the phone, and the farmer shot him. That's tough, man. That's pretty badass.

John: I don t remember that part, the shooting?

Robert: He lived!

John: He s alive now.

Robert: And he continues onward in the Artimus Pyle Band...

John: All Points Bulletin.

Robert: Not to be confused with Artimus Pyle.

MRR: Is it true that Robert writes all the lyrics that aren't credited to John Stuart?
John: Yes.
MRR: But Robert, you seem so nice. How come all the lyrics and the graphics for the records are kind of on the dismal side?
Robert: Everybody's got, like, demons or whatever you want to call it, inside. Most of the lyrics, especially the really dim and dismal ones, are written about friends and people who I am close to whose lives are really, really, really more messed up than mine. I don't say that to make me sound better or anything like that.
John: 'Cause your life is pretty fucked up.
Robert: My life s pretty shitty. (both laughing) It certainly affects you when you're always surrounded by people who deal with a lot of shit in their lives all the time, and a lot of shit with themselves as well.
MRR: And it seems like that's reflected in the music the band plays. It's heavy, on the ugly side, pretty aggressive.
Jensen: I'm heavy and on the ugly side. I can be pretty aggressive. You can take that part out—don't write that.
John: Don't edit your own interview, man. Well, edit that, what I just said. Take that out.
MRR: How did it come to be that this guy, John Stuart, contributed lyrics to the band?
Robert: I used to work in downtown San Francisco at a restaurant, where I gave all my friends lots of free food. One day I was taking out the garbage, and in the garbage can was a big pile, a foot high, of pieces of cardboard, and on the pieces of cardboard was written the life story, and various incoherent rants, by John Stuart.
MRR: He signed it?
Robert: He told his whole life story. My name is, I was born in, this is how I've been fucked by my family and society from the very beginning of my life, and I'm completely insane, and I can't even check myself into a mental institution, etc., etc. I went home from work and I just read this huge piece of cardboard, written in small handwriting with a pen, top to bottom. Just tale after tale after tale of being fucked by mental institutions and fucked by city and social services, etc. I pulled some of that and got the lyrics for three songs out of that.
MRR: In the past two years the band went to Japan, toured the US, and toured Europe as well?
Jensen: It's weird; I don t remember the Japanese tour...
Robert: Jensen, who's sitting right there, is our drummer, but... How was Japan, Jensen?
Jensen: I don't think I went.
Robert: That's weird, cause you're in the band.
Jensen: You decided to take some fucking crank smoker instead of me.
MRR: It seemed to me that Fuckface toured all the time, but for a long time Artimus Pyle didn't tour at all.
John: We weren't a touring band.
Robert: We had a member of our band who did not want to tour, and could not tour for various reasons. And now we have a member who does want to tour, and can tour.
Jensen: I wish we were on tour now.
Robert: We just were, so suck it up.
MRR: Let's hear about the US tour. Where did the band get a good response—Oklahoma?
Robert: Not really. The Oklahoma City show was...
John: There weren't really a lot of people there to respond.
Jensen: All the people that would have really rocked out were out of town.
Robert: If they'd been in town, it would have been amazing.
John: I thought the Columbus, Ohio show was one of the best of that tour...
Jensen: Austin, Texas—woah!
John: I wouldn't say we had a better response there, but we had fun there.
Robert: Seattle, though, was the best show of the tour.
John: That's true.
Robert: We played a warehouse in Seattle with Wormwood, Akimbo, and...
Jensen: ...another emo band who actually lives at the warehouse. Which is, I think, why they played.
Robert: There was supposed to be Kylesa. We were supposed to do the whole US with

Kylesa, but Jensen broke their van on the first day of the tour, so they didn't actually get to come with us.
Jensen: On that tour, this weird thing kept happening... The first time it happened was Kylesa. We got to the show, and I said, as a joke, 'cause it was their first tour ever as a band, and I was like, oh yeah, it'll be funny—their first tour, their van is gonna break down on the first day. And sure enough, we go to drive to Gainesville, the day after Savannah, with them, and their van broke down, and they didn't play any shows with us, except that Gainesville show, because someone was kind enough to tow 'em into town, and Savannah the night before. Then, in Philadelphia, it was Self-Defense. We were on the way to the pretzel place after the show, 'cause I guess on Thursdays it's pretzel night—all the punk rockers go and eat pretzels for free at this late night place...
John: Two for a dollar.
Robert: A whole street filled side-to-side with punkers eating pretzels at 3 o' clock in the morning.
Jensen: It is excellent. On the way there I said, ha ha ha, wouldn't it be funny if their transmission fell out. And their transmission didn't actually fall out...
Robert: It definitely stopped working.
Jensen: ...but it stopped working, and all they had was second gear, every once in a while. And reverse.
Robert: They had to cancel their tour, also.
MRR: I think I went to see them at the BART station, and they didn't show up.
Jensen: The last time it happened was in Denver—there was this band from San Diego called An Arrow in Flight. And I said something to the effect of, their van will break down. And it did.
Robert: We got an email when we got home saying that our drummer has interesting powers, because their van died on the way home from tour.
Jensen: And those were the only three times I ever said anything about anybody's van.
Robert: He s not allowed to do that anymore.
MRR: I was gonna say, I hope you've learned to use your power...
Jensen: Well, people fuck with me...
MRR: ...Selectively, sure.
Jensen: People in traveling bands better be nice.
MRR: Did you play bar shows on the US tour?
Jensen: Try not to.
Robert: I don t think we did on the US tour. There s a lot of debate about bar shows, and of course bar shows aren't as fun, usually, but in your hometown, as long as you play all-ages shows also, I don t see what the big fucking deal is. 'Cause there's a lot of older people who don't like going to all-ages shows because all-ages shows are usually a bunch of kids. And while I'm all for doing it for the kids, I also understand if a bunch of people who are in their late twenties and thirties don't want to hang out with a bunch of sixteen-year-olds. And that 's no bad comment on the sixteen-year-olds...
Jensen: At the same time, sometimes kids don't want to go to a bar environment where everyone is standing around with their arms crossed, in a bad mood.
Robert: There are good things about both kinds of shows. But on tour, you should always try to play all-ages.
Jensen: I think we only played one bar show on tour.
John: Not one that was closed to kids, 21-and-over only. I don't think we had one like that.
Robert: The Minneapolis show was in a bar, but it was all-ages.
John: That's where that kid stole my fuckin' beer.
MRR: That's the problem when you don't let the kids bring their own.
John: That's what happens. This underage kid shows up, he steals my beer. I set it down for like two minutes, I came back and he's sitting down, enjoying it.
Jensen: See, this is over-thirty rage, right here. This is what happens at the bars.
Robert: That's why old people and young people should not mix. (laughing)
MRR: The US tour broke even, financially?
Jensen: Yes it did, actually. We did pretty well.
John: First time ever.
Jensen: We came home with like twenty extra dollars each.
Robert: Maybe even thirty.
MRR: Did the Japanese tour break even, financially?
Jensen: I don't remember.
Robert: You weren't there, actually.
Jensen: Must not have.
Robert: It was pretty close, one way or the other.
John: It wasn't the financial disaster that some of our other tours have been.
Jensen: That Europe was.
MRR: Speaking of Europe...you were there when the US invaded Iraq, the most recent time.
Robert: We were sitting at our host's house in Germany when Bush gave the "Saddam Hussein, you have forty-eight hours to leave" Iraq speech.
Jensen: I think we started our tour the day they started bombing.
MRR: So what did you see or notice?
Robert: Everybody was fuckin' pissed at America.
John: Only for the first week and half, two weeks, though. The rest of the tour we didn't hear that much.
Jensen: Nobody really talked about it. It wasn't big news where we were.
John: We were expecting to hear a lot of stuff. We were told to expect to hear a lot of stuff, but we didn't really.
Jensen: We didn't see any newscasts at all.
Robert: You're essentially completely cut off from news because you don't speak the language in the countries where you are. Every now and then, people would talk about it, but we were fully prepared to be bombarded with questions, comments, complaints, criticisms, from people where we went, and it didn't happen.
John: Except for the fuckin' Canaries.
Jensen: Yeah, they had the anti-USA stuff everywhere.
Robert: There were a few really cool things. Like in Barcelona, in the city center, every night at ten o' clock, leading up to and during the war, all the residents would go out onto their balconies and bang pots and pans on their railings.
Jensen: There are a lot of residents there.
Robert: A lot of people. It's deafeningly loud, and it can go on for ten or fifteen minutes.
Jensen: Sometimes longer.
Robert: The fact that it happened on such a large scale and happened every single night is pretty impressive.
MRR: What about Iceland?
Robert: Fuckin' A!
Jensen: Shit yeah.
MRR: Were you the first American hardcore band to play there?
Robert: No. Out Cold was there before us, about two or three years ago.
MRR: How'd you like Iceland? What did you think of it?
Jensen: It was probably one of the greatest things I've ever done in my whole life. I can't wait to go back.
Robert: The shows were fun as shit. The people were fuckin' awesome.
John: Everyone there was totally cool.
Jensen: The crew of crippled kids...
Robert: Öroku Edge. I can tell you a story...
Jensen: I got so choked up watching those kids.
Robert: I got a little misty. There's a crew called the Öroku Edge. Öroku means broken or worthless in Icelandic. I'd been sending emails to one of the guys in Öroku Edge, and Birkir, who set up our tour, he picked us up and he's like, I can't wait for you to meet the Öroku Edge. I said, what's that? He said, it's all these handicapped

There's a crew of like seven or eight people with various disabilities. Some have to walk with canes, some have to use walkers, a couple are confined to wheelchairs. One's paralyzed from the neck down. And they're totally fucking into punk. And when I Adapt, from Reykjavik, was playing, there were six kids right up front. And the ones who can move their arms are pumping their fists in the air, they're singing every word to every song. It was why punk is fucking amazing and powerful, because for that set, those kids are not handicapped. Those kids are perfectly normal, and they were so fucking stoked. They were having so much fun.

Jensen: The thing that really got me about them was that the other kids in the crowd were just crushing them, 'cause they were going nuts. And these kids aren't the most mobile, 'cause they got wheelchairs and walkers and stuff. So the other kids would be flying all over the place and just landing all over them, knocking them over. Somebody would offer a hand or something to help them up, and the kids would just swat the hand away and get up on their own. That's fuckin' great. That's such spirit, you know?

John: They were screaming the words.

Robert: The shows were amazing anyway. The people there were fucking awesome anyway. But seeing those kids and seeing how those kids interact with the rest of the scene there was one of the greatest things I'd ever seen on tour. Not just this tour, but on any tour. It was fucking great and I can't wait to go back.

MRR: How long were you in the country?

Robert: Three days. We played two shows in Reykjavik.

Jensen: Did some touristy stuff. We saw as much as we could, between the press interviews and stuff.

Robert: We were on the front page of Iceland's oldest newspaper.

MRR: Woah!

Robert: In the other Reykjavik area daily, there's the headmast, and there's the entertainment section, and it says blah blah blah blah, and there's a picture of my face.

MRR: I bet that's where *Terrorizer* fuckin' tuned in.

Robert: That s right. *Terrorizer* saw that, fuckin' jumped on the bandwagon.

John: These guys are hot in Iceland.

MRR: Is it true that someone in the band fears and hates hot liquids?

Jensen: That is true. That would be me. For as long as I can remember, I've had a stigma about hot liquids. I don't know how it started, or if I had a bad experience when I was a child, or what. But any sort of liquid that's hot and in a container, like coffee or soup...

Robert: What about a bottle of piss?

Jensen: (shuddering) Uhh. If I touch it, it totally grosses me out.

John: What happens? You get the heebie-jeebies?

Jensen: Yeah, the hair goes up on the back of my neck. It's stupid, I don't know why.

MRR: Does it cause you problems in your everyday life?

Jensen: No, not really.

John: Others can benefit from this.

Robert: It's good for me, cause when we go to Great Wall (vegetarian Chinese restaurant in Berkeley], I get his soup.

MRR: What about this thing, "passion metal"? Do you now, or did you ever self-identify with this term?

Robert: For about six months...

Jensen: Passion metal? What the fuck is that?

Robert: ...about five years ago.

John: When the band first started. We made up our own term.

Robert: It was a stupid term. It was us and Time in Malta. We made up our own genre. It didn't last.

John: We were also Sexy Hardcore.

Robert: It has a better ring to it.

John: The girls thought of that one.

Robert: Our ladies decided to call us Sexy Hardcore.

Jensen: I'm into that.

MRR: What's next for the band? I read in *Maximum Rocknroll* two years ago that the band was breaking up. Then just last month, I read that you'd be playing out much less. I heard that John and Robert are moving to Milwaukee.

Robert: That is true.

MRR: Jensen, are you thinking about moving to Milwaukee?

Jensen: No way. It's too cold there. I'm gonna move to Seattle instead. Start a grunge band with Kurt Kobain s ashes. It's gonna be killer, bro.

MRR: What is gonna happen to the band?

Jensen: We're gonna go into hibernation for a short while, and then when the new LP comes out, I think that we might play some shows in the Midwest. I'll just fly out there, practice, and hang out for a while. That's probably what will happen, from now on anyway.

Robert: At this point, it's not exactly unusual for a band to be located all over the place. It's not a big deal.

MRR: Anything else you want to say?

John: I have to say that *Maximum Rocknroll* is my favorite magazine. (starts laughing)

Jensen: Seriously, it s the only magazine that I get with any regularity. I get it every month. That's about as regular as the magazine.

John: I read *Terrorizer*.

Robert: Who doesn't, really?

Jensen: I think that for my last comment I would say that if anyone wants to send any gifts, they can send it to the Artimus Pyle address, attention Jensen. That would be fine. Records are good, vegan food is good. As long as it's new.

John: Do you like cash?

Jensen: Cash is fine, I take money orders also. Made out to Jensen Ward. Not Artimus Pyle, 'cause that's not me.

Discography:

s/t EP 1998, Life is Abuse
Civil Dead LP/CD 1999, Prank
V/A, *Death to False Metal vol. 2* CD 1999, Probe
Cold Cold Earth EP 2000, Prank
split EP with Crow 2001 Mangrove (Japan)
Fortress EP 2002, Prank
split EP with Diallo 2003, Busted Heads
Inheritance EP 2003, Flower Violence
Fucked From Birth LP/CD 2003, Prank
V/A, *Super Sabado Gigante* LP 2003, Prank, Six Weeks, 625

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La FRACTION

HAILING FROM PARIS, LA FRACTION CRANK OUT SOME OF THE MOST TUNEFUL, PASSIONATE, MELODIC PUNK GOING THESE DAYS. FANS OF EVERYONE FROM POST REGIMENT TO THE GITS WOULD BE DOING THEMSELVES A FAVOR IN CHECKING OUT EITHER ONE OF THEIR TWO POWERFUL LP's - AND RUMORS HAVE BEEN ABOUNDING FOR SOMETIME OF THEIR EQUALLY AWE INSPIRING LIVE SHOWS. NEEDLESS TO SAY WHEN I GOT THE EMAIL FROM YANNICK ABOUT THEIR UPCOMING NORTH AMERICAN TOUR THIS FALL, I WAS GRINNING FROM EAR TO EAR FOR DAYS...

INTERVIEW BY YANNICK LORAIN.
INTRO BY MIKE THORN.

MRR: French punk past and present isn't exactly regarded as influential by any means. Are you a little surprised that through playing the traditional French sound your band has been able to cross boundaries and become one of the more popular live bands in Europe?

La Fraction: I don't really understand if what you call "the French sound" is the fact that we sing in French or if it is the overall sound that for you is typically French.

The reception we got across Europe in the beginning was way more enthusiastic than at home, possibly because those scenes were more open, dynamic, and less sectarian. Being more popular in Europe than at home certainly surprises us since we *do* sing in French, but we've understood that most people are more interested in the band on stage and the voice. I think people are a little more curious in general, and the clichés related to language disappear if the band appears to be sincere and honest with the crowd. True, we're an exception in France; for every ten shows we play, eight are outside the country. Traveling and meeting people from different cultures is more than fine by us though. There's a saying in French that applies to us quit well: *None is prophet in his own country.*

MRR: Speaking of "the French sound", what has prevented it from overstepping boundaries?

La Fraction: First of all, we think there is a cultural problem at work here, in that three-quarters of the bands try to emulate English or American music, but it is nearly impossible to reach that sound with the limits of the language, pricey studios, and lack of willing labels.

Daydreams of becoming the next Mano Negra dilute the pleasure of playing and sharing your music with the public. As soon as a new foreign band becomes popular, you can be sure that there are many French copies to follow, catering to the local, inward-looking scene rather than trying to play outside the borders. Admittedly, the quality of French bands is often inferior; bands barely tour, making the live presence insecure due to a lack of practice, etc. The lack of independent labels and the skewed consumerism based on foreign scenes make for a generally weak dynamic in the scene.

MRR: Your first LP is on a bigger independent label in France, Crash Disques, while the the new LP is on Skuld. How did that happen? Was it a conscious push away from Crash Disques? Did it have to do with touring the DIY circuit at all?

La Fraction: Actually, Crash was also doing the CD and for us it was out of the question not to release an LP. Problem was, we we're selling 90 percent of the LPs internationally through the DIY network. So when Skuld asked, it was logical to lean towards that. The CD is still on Crash, which permits us to be exposed in France also. As for tours, we always did them DIY and tabled our own records. Skuld enabled us to have better international distribution.

MRR: Do you think the state of France's punk scene is in any way related to there not being as big a squat "scene" as in most of Europe?

La Fraction: The French alternative scene is certainly less dynamic that the rest of Europe. Few are the squats and groups making up an infrastructure for bands to play and flourish. On another level entirely, the "official" circuit with promoters, label, grants, and all that is alive, but most punk bands refuse it thankfully. We couldn't care less ourselves.

MRR: France is up there as one of

the most inward-looking, introverted Western countries, and, as a whole, critical of American influence. Did you grow up on French punk exclusively, or did America export itself to the remote corners of France as it did all over the world?

La Fraction: It is a fact that the French are hesitant about America, both on an ideological level as well as on a cultural one. Granted, we surely don't see much of the good side of the US here in France, but there is no denying the prejudices. But we obviously did listen to American punk, and even more to English bands. During the 80s foreign bands were much more enthusiastic than their French counterparts, and we, as all punks, were fans of the Dead Kennedys, Ramones, Black Flag, the Clash, Buzzcocks, etc.

MRR: What are your main musical and lyrical influences, past and present?

La Fraction: Mainly old English punk bands from the late 70s and early 80s. The Clash for the spirit and the music, the Buzzcocks, Damned- that era remains very important to us. Furthermore, the politics of bands like Crass and Berurier Noir had their effect, along with Dead Kennedys, many Alternative Tentacles bands. From France, Oth were a big one, both on a musical level as well as lyrically. As for today, we're influenced by bands ranging from Tragedy and From Ashes Rise to Post-Regiment, Lost, Inner-Terrestrials, in short, many bands from the DIY scene who we had the pleasure of playing with or seeing, either at festivals or in Paris. Our literary influences are very eclectic.

MRR: You're touring here in October, with another French band no less. Do you think that your nationality, in light of last year's tense moments, will play into your getting into the country at all? And do you think your tour itself will suffer or benefit from the tension between the US and France? What are your expectations?

La Fraction: It's great to discover a country that is unknown to all of us, to see its scene and the people who partake in it and have the most fun possible. As for tension between France and the US, we think most people who'll meet us through the punk scene already think and react similar to people in the European scene, so, no problems expected. As for our expectations, it's a new adventure and we plan on embracing it to the fullest, granted we get through the-border OK. We're eager.

MRR: It's interesting to witness just how powerful the mass media is in shaping public opinion in times like these when it's in need of cannon fodder. Did you know French fries, French bread, and French kissing have become Freedom fries, Freedom bread, and Freedom kissing following France's stance on the Iraq invasion?

La Fraction: We've read of this funny and rather stupid anecdote in the press. We generally have a bipolar vision of the US; first of all, of the American people found themselves with an administration and a president that wasn't democratically elected, who took democracy hostage. That evidently brought about a manipulation of public opinion. Unfortunately in this situation the public found itself a powerless witness to a government it didn't choose. The other vision is of Bush and his friends, whose positions allow them to give enormous influence to private interests. We believe they are a danger to the world at large.

The recent events in Iraq were all too predictable, and repeated attacks against US soldiers are a legitimate resistance by a people against an invader. The US media ran with the plan, covered up the hypocrisy of a government hell-bent on installing "democracy" abroad while its own his-

LA FRACTION & BORN DEAD ICONS (Canada) North American Tour October 2003

OCTOBER
2 Providence
3 Boston
4 New York
5 Philadelphia
6 Pittsburgh @ Mr. Roboto
7 Columbus
8 Nashville
9 Little rock? (NEED HELP)
10 Dallas
11 Austin
12 ?? (NEED HELP)
13 ?? (NEED HELP)
14 Phoenix
15 San Diego @ Che Cafe
16 Los Angeles
17 San Francisco
18 Berkeley @ Gilman w/ Phobia, Cripple Bastards
19 Eureka? (NEED HELP)
20 Portland
21 Seattle
22 ?? (NEED HELP)
23 ?? (NEED HELP)
24 Minneapolis @ Triple Rock
25 Milwaukie
26 Chicago
27 Detroit / Ann Arbor ?? (NEED HELP)
28 Buffalo ?? (NEED HELP)
29 Connecticut
30 New Jersey ?? (NEED HELP)
31 Altoona, PA
1 Montreal

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tory, past and present, is anything but. Of course, the French media during these tense times also played with public opinion locally, no doubt. But we have a hard time believing that Americans in general have that strong of an anti-French sentiment at this point. The repression at anti-war rallies in the US pointed to a government ready to be violent and dangerous even towards its own population, which sheds light on this "democracy" it pretends to be an international representative of.

MRR: What's in the headlines there these days?

La Fraction: The headlines are based on local issues these days. It's the holidays now, so the wildfires in the South are big news. But, internationally speaking, this scuffle with Tony Blair, the UN weapon's inspector committing suicide, the attacks on US soldiers, and the Israeli/Palestinian problems. Here, as is true everywhere, media plays the role of government information dispatch. We're allowed to hear what's been filtered and deemed public.

MRR: Is the social system showing cracks under this pressure? I know that the Canadian system-similar yet very different-is starting to crumble. Welfare is being privatized, as is health care and education, which will surely engender further social dislocations.

La Fraction: As we mentioned above, it's a flat-out attack against the social system in France, which has forcibly brought about strikes and demonstrations like the ones coming up in September and October. Of course, the Gross Domestic Product is climbing, which points to more and more money, but the underside is the rising numbers of those out of work, while aid to the poor and unemployed is dropping. In short, it's liberalism backed by police repression, as in most industrial nations.

MRR: How has the Euro changed daily monetary dealings? I don't quite understand how the transfer worked exactly. Did you retain the same purchasing power? Does a baguette cost the equivalent of what it did before? Was there opposition to the switch?

La Fraction: The transfer to the Euro happened relatively easily; the idea of a common currency in Europe has been in the planning stages for over ten years, so the population's had time to adapt to the idea, and it's viewed well for the most part. As for the working of the change, the equivalences were relative to what they were before. One Euro now equals two German marks, which in turn equals six-and-a-half French francs. Everyone's used to that. As far as purchasing power goes, it seems that it's dropped across the board for the neighboring countries, Belgium, Germany, Holland, etc. In France, prices went up three times in a year and a half. Life is generally more expensive and the wages remain the same. Nationalist parties were the main ones against the Euro; the National front evidently, but also certain so-called populist parties.

MRR: The lyrics on your last LP show a definite positive outlook while retaining a certain bitterness. Who writes the bulk of the lyrics, and is there a certain event that's shaped the tone of the words? I guess what I'm getting to is that I heard a few years back of Magalia's severe throat problems. What happened and does that surface in the lyrics?

La Fraction: Magali and Dede write our lyrics, and they're generally inspired by life at large. We take from all the fucked up and beautiful shit that goes on in this world, bet we try not to be too simplistic or vindictive. Life's made of nuance and we try our best to capture that in the words and the feeling.

As for the health issues, Magali did indeed suffer vocal cord problems and had to be operated on, followed by many months of recuperation. We were therefore inactive for almost a year and a half, but all seems to go well nowadays. Punk vocalists' voices are often abused. Little about that transpired through the lyrics though.

MRR: How old are you?

La Fraction: Between 30 and 36.

MRR: How long have you been a band?

The band formed in February 1992, so 11 years ago, with all the same members.

MRR: Last Words?

La Fraction: We're all happy to be able to play our freedom punk to you for a month this fall!

Contact: c/o Boris Hallard / 65, Bd Voltaire /75011 Paris / France / fraction@altern.org

KUNGFU RICK

comes to an end

R x I x P

Spawned from the mid-90s hardcore explosion in Chicago, Kung Fu Rick was one of the few from the area to stick together long enough to tour the US a couple of times and release a handful of noteworthy records. Who would have thought that ski goggles, a terrible band name, and breakneck thrash would be a formula to make the kids go nuts. Unfortunately, the band broke up in early 2003 to pursue other musical endeavors including the likes of Seven Days of Samsara, Hewhocorrupts, Littleman Complex, High on Crime, Authority Abuse, and Destroy the Foundation.

Interview by David Hoffa.
Photos by Dave 4g.

MRR: I know that "Rick" isn't an actual person, but can you elaborate on where the name Kung Fu Rick came from?

John M: I was in gym class, sophomore year (which would have been 1996) and this total hippie kid in my class was like, "Kung Fu Grip, man, that's a cool band name!" I guess I just played around with it and was like...hmmm...Kung Fu Rick? It just kind of stuck. It was strange and odd, yet it stuck in your head. So we decided to go with it.

Ryan: A lot of people thought we were a ska band because of that name.

MRR: You've had some lineup changes over the years, who did what in the band?

John M: The original members that stayed throughout the life of Kung Fu Rick were myself, John, on guitar, Ryan, on vocals, and Bryan (aka the Dark Enforcer) on vocals. The original bassist was Eric Kline and the original drummer was John Biehl. We all went to the same high school and were within a year of each other in age. The band ended with John Finaldi on drums, Jason Zdora on second guitar (even though he quit the band two times!), and Dave Rudnik (Seven Days of Samsara) on bass.

MRR: Kung Fu Rick has released a number of split 7"s. How did you choose who you were going to do the splits with? Was it just whoever was available and had songs?

John M: We were asked to do many records, surprisingly. Usually it just had to do with the other band, and/or the label, and our relationship with them. But many times we started new relationships through these records, which is always a good thing.

Ryan: During periods when the band was not getting along, Hewhocorrupts would usually do the splits we were offered instead.

MRR: How did the connection with 625 records come about; or with any label for that matter?

John M: We had sent Max our first demo and he replied back that he liked it a lot, but he wasn't down with putting anything out at the time. It wasn't until our second demo and the show that we played with Capitalist Casualties here in Chicago that really got Max interested in putting out our stuff.

Ryan: The earlier splits were mostly done with labels that we knew personally, from our area.

MRR: When Kung Fu Rick started, there weren't many hardcore bands around the Chicago suburbs. What led you to start a band of this nature?

John M: Well, Charles Bronson was around at the time, as was MK Ultra. We initially sounded nothing like Kung Fu Rick sounded on most of the records, nor how we sounded when we ended. We just wanted to play fast and crazy music, period. Most of us in the band really didn't listen to hardcore; neither did most of the original members. Ryan was the person who knew the most about hardcore at the time; the band just grew on its own.

MRR: You've all been involved in other projects within the Chicago/Milwaukee scenes. For the Kung Fu Rick completists, can you tell me what everyone has had their hands in?

Dave: Wretch, The Fratelli's, Luke Skawalker, Seven Days of Samsara, Secret Scars, High on Crime.

John F: I played in Suburban Refugee, Pronounced Dead, Audience Of The End, Systemic Infection, and Chronic Bleeding Syndrome. I'm currently in Destroy The Foundation and High On Crime.

Jay: I was in Suburban Refugee, Pronounced Dead, and Chronic Bleeding Syndrome. I'm currently in Destroy the Foundation, Hewhocorrupts, and various no-name projects with friends.

Ryan: Hewhocorrupts with John and Jay, Authority Abuse with John, Tale of Genji, Littleman Complex, and the infamous Tobucdet.

MRR: Kung Fu Rick's music is as serious as it gets, but the members of the band have an excellent sense of humor. Do you think it's important for hardcore bands to have a sense of humor and not take themselves too seriously?

Dave: I totally think it's important for everyone to have a sense of humor. It's really easy to get bogged down with all the shit that goes on in the world, as well as our personal lives, so without humor, the human race would be fucked.

John M: Yes, we are a wild bunch of guys. We like to have fun and we most definitely like to joke around. That's just the way we've always been. Sometimes that's good and other times it's not.

Ryan: Yeah, at times, I'm not sure if our sense of humor was a good thing for the band.

MRR: Do you think that the Internet has positively or negatively affected hardcore? I would tend to think that file sharing and CD burning is the future of what tape trading was pre-internet, but some people think differently. Do you care to elaborate?

Dave: I think the Internet has had a very positive effect on hardcore. It enables people from all over the world to hear shitty obscure bands, to read about what they're up to, where they're playing, and whatever else people want to put on their web page. It has also made it a million times easier to tour. I booked one tour before I started using email and there's really nothing more expensive and annoying than making phone call after phone call to people you don't know and who don't really want to talk to you. Email is a polite, unobtrusive way to make initial contact with people who may help you out with a show. I'm not saying that there aren't flaws to the Internet. I get a little sick of the shit talking on message boards and the spreading of rumors, but I guess that comes with the territory. There's no way Kung Fu Rick could have been what it was without the Internet.

John F: I'll agree with Dave, booking tours is much easier. It's nice to be able to drop a line to a friend or band across the map. It has definitely helped out with networking, but at the same time I think it has taken away some of the ethics of punk rock. It seems like people get sucked into what band has the best web site, or what's being said on some message board. I try not to get too involved, but I still get sucked in.

MRR: The band is obviously a metal-influenced band. Do you think that the current state of hardcore is splintered into too many different genres? For example: "metal influenced emo-core with brit-pop tendencies," or something of that nature. It seems that it's getting harder to find out what a band sounds like without getting a twenty word run-on sentence these days.

Dave: I don't think it's bad that you need a twenty word run on sentence to describe a band. To me, that means they're trying something new. On the 625 web page Max describes us as, "Ultra fast, punishing hardcore...somewhere between German HC style and grind. Technical, yet raw, original, yet brutal." Where someone else might just say "Charles Bronson rip-off" or just simply "hardcore." Who cares what you call it, its just entertainment. I think it's rad that bands in the DIY punk scene are trying new things. It's just a shame that these new individual scenes are so segregated.

Ryan: Hmmm, I'm not sure though, I have felt for a long time that my screams have brit-pop tendencies.

MRR: Do you think that you accomplished everything that you set out to do as a band?

Dave: No, I think we could have accomplished a hell of a lot more, but if we had, it wouldn't have been Kung Fu Rick. I would have liked to tour more, possibly gone to Europe and Japan, but Kung Fu Rick was a lazy band that released a lot of records and more or less had a good time whenever we decided to practice or play shows, which wasn't too often.

John M: I agree with Dave, we could have done a lot more. We could have toured more, spent more time writing songs and just overall been a better band. It's kind of sad, but I am still very grateful for everything we have done and how it all ended. I couldn't have asked for more.

John F: Definitely not. I'll never live down the fact that we never toured Japan, but at the same time the last few years have been a struggle for this band. There were certain people in the band that I never saw unless we were playing a show. I got sick of people asking me if we had broke up. It seemed like everyone had more important things to do. I would be at a show or drinking at a bar and someone would ask me what was up with Kung Fu Rick. I would just say, "The fuck if I know, ask one of the other guys, I just play drums."

Ryan: Nope. We fell short of my "excellent record review" quota of at or above 50. I'm still picking up the pieces to my shattered heart.

MRR: One lyric that has always stuck out for me is: "it was not me they were beating" from the title track off of *Motivation to Abuse*. So, the lyrics seem pretty personal. What sorts of experiences do you draw your lyrics from? Did all of the members contribute, or was it just one person?

Jay: Ryan wrote most of the lyrics to our songs, but Dave, John M. and I have contributed as well. This song was about my experiences at a Chicago public high school. A couple years after this happened; I ended up being good friends with one of the guys who used to beat the shit out of me.

Ryan: John F. and Bryan also wrote some of the songs so we're six for six in that department.

MRR: Can you explain the mystery of the dark enforcer?

Ryan: I could, but then it wouldn't be a mystery anymore. Anyhow, what's so mysterious about a guy wearing a black cloak and ski goggles while squawking like a chicken?

MRR: I know that you did two actual tours, one on the west coast with My Lai, and one on the east coast with the Ultimate Warriors. Who set them up, and how were they? Were there certain places that you wanted to play that you never played?

Dave: Brian Peterson booked the My Lai tour and I booked the Ultimate Warriors tour. The My Lai tour was awesome and the Ultimate Warriors tour could have been a hell of a lot better. Part of it was my fault, but mostly I think that tour was flawed because we just weren't getting along at the time. Even though we weren't getting along, our show in Baltimore at the Sushi Cafe on that tour was amazing. But yeah, as I said before I would have like to tour more and hit all the places where people asked us to play, but shit, that just wouldn't have been us.

John F: The My Lai tour was one of the greatest things I've ever done in my life. We were so lucky to go on the road with such an amazing band. The Ultimate Warriors tour was doomed from the start. We weren't getting along that well before we left, and all that shit got dragged along with us. Jay quit the band a few times on that tour. I remember pulling up in front of my house after it was all over and while I was talking to Dave, I turned around and all my stuff was getting chucked out of the van onto the front lawn. We didn't practice or play out for a long time after that. And I learned heavy drinking is not a good thing when you're on a tense tour.

Jay: I don't think touring gets much better than the time we went out with My Lai; they were some of the best times of my life. Playing a battle set with My Lai in a gazebo, The Velvet Lounge in El Paso with Arab on Radar, sleeping at this rich crusty's house in California which was practically a fucking castle in the mountains (with three full refrigerators!), the insanity at Gilman, jerkin it at the Whole Foods and getting jiz all over my Crudos shirt, so many good times! The Ultimate Warriors were some of the coolest guys I've ever met. I really enjoyed playing with those dudes and swimming/swinging on that rope by the river. I was the big problem with that tour. I really fucked everyone over by quitting and being stupid on the road. I just had enough. I wasn't doing the band for the reasons I was before. My whole outlook had begun to change. I think I ruined a good thing by being that way, but I think I also followed my heart, so it's weird. I still love and respect all the guys from the band and I'm excited about our new shit.

MRR: Any final thoughts?

John F: Thanks to everyone that supported us over the years. Big apologies to anyone we may have let down. Don't ever sell yourself short, and stay true.

Jay: I really owe the guys a lot for letting me play those last five shows. It felt really good to be a part of the band's end. I really want to thank Max Ward and Brian Peterson for all their help and support. I'd also like to thank Ryan for putting many of our records out for free on independent tape labels in several countries. Mendola's parents really need to get thanked here too, since they had to listen to us practice.

Ryan: Stay gold, Pony Boy. Stay gold.

THE HORROR

The Horror is an amazing fast-as-fuck hardcore band from England. I saw them a few times in Europe and then again on their East Coast American tour this winter, and every time they rocked ferociously. It was way cool to hang out with them for all the time we did, goofing off, making fools of ourselves, and laughing at the whole spectacle of Amsterdam's Red Light District. That aside, we finally got to do this over email after they left to go back to England, so get down and dig this.

Interview by Matt Times. Photos by Justine DeMetrick.

MRR: For those unfortunate individuals that have yet to hear of you, where is The Horror from, and who does who or what in the band?

Andy: The persons that make up The Horror are from various places in the north of England. The "musicians" all live in and around the Leeds area, and the "singer" lives in Birmingham. Because the majority of the band is in Leeds we're pretty much based there-we rehearse in Leeds and we also end up doing quite a few shows there. In terms of who does what, Steve is on the bass, Atko and Arms on guitar, Dave on drums, and I yell.

MRR: What kind of stuff do you guys play, and how and when did you get together?

Andy: We play fast hardcore punk rock-we try to get away from any other of definition, it is just how I describe it there. The first rehearsal I went to was at the beginning of January 2002. The rest of the guys had a number of songs together before that, which they mailed me on tape-so we've been "together" about a year. I used to be in a band called Imbalance, which I decided to leave around October 2001. At the same time, Voorhees had just returned from the US and it wasn't working out, so that fell apart, but they wanted to carry on doing a band. As I'd known Steve and Dave for a number of years, they asked me to sign up, and here we are.

Steve: After the Voorhees tour we decided to bow out. Voorhees had been around in various shapes and forms for ten years. Ian, the singer, was the only original member left, so the rest felt as if it wasn't really our band; after a time we felt like frauds. We had some great times and I'll be forever thankful to everyone that helped us out, but for the rest of us, it was time to do something new. My original vision of The Horror was a fast-ass thrash band that cursed like a sailor, and I think that's what we have.

MRR: Yeah, I'll agree-the cursing-like-a-sailor thing is definitely a top priority and I think is

executed nicely. How did things go for you on this US tour? I think it was Andy's first tour in the US?

Steve: This was my third time touring the US, and it was definitely the best one yet. It was a lot more relaxed, a lot more fun. The gigs (not shows) were cool, and people were very receptive to us for a band they'd never heard before. There was never a night where I thought, fuck this, I'd rather be drinking in some bar all night.

Andy: The tour was excellent, and you're right, it was my first experience of touring in the US. We had a great time. It was an opportunity for me to see America from a different perspective, as I was traveling with Americans and staying at kids' houses, etc., and in doing so you're always gonna get a more honest view of things than what the travel brochure will show you. It also felt really strange being an English band in the US as it's not that common, and is totally unlike home where there are "foreign" bands touring all the time. And it has to be said that it was fun to see a lot of the scenery, which I'd only previously seen in movies and on TV. A big thanks goes out to Will and Tom from Chainsaw Safety and G-Funk for organizing stuff and putting up with our fucking idiotic behavior. It's pretty difficult setting up shows for a band from England who no one's heard of and who only has a demo out, but nonetheless it was great. People really looked after us despite many obstacles, so thanks a lot-you know who yer are.

MHR: Did you guys play with anyone you really wanted to see, band-wise, or meet any new bands you really dug?

Steve: It was great to see the Kill your Idols and Out Cold chaps, as we've been friends with those guys for years now, and also to catch up with new friends like the guys in Tear It Up and the Catonsville crew. As for new bands, well there was many: Exosus, Biovore, the Rites, Cut The Shit, xFilesx...now my mind goes blank! I also saw Psycho, one of the worst bands I've ever seen in my life! Fuck that stinky drummer and his KKK baseball cap.

MHR: I heard about that guy. I mean, a Thor's Hammer necklace and KKK cap doesn't necessarily mean you're white power, does it? Sorry, anyway. Andy, you were saying?

Andy: Before we went, I knew we had a couple of shows with Tear it Up and one with Kill your Idols. I was really looking forward to those, especially, as I hadn't seen both bands for a while-so that was really good, just to be playing in the US, with y'know, some of your favorite bands. We also ended up doing a show with Out Cold, which was great, as I like 'em and missed 'em when they've been to England previously. In terms of bands that I hadn't heard before, I was into the Rites, (this is just gonna end up coming across as major arse kissing), and enjoyed a lot of the other bands we did shows with. However, all of this aside, all the bands who we played with were really accommodating in terms of borrowing equipment, etc., and we did make some new friends

MHR: Well due to the double mention, yeah you both do look like kiss-asses. Moving on, though, how is the scene back in merry olde England?

Andy: On the whole, I'm of the opinion that the UK has a very healthy scene. There are a lot of dedicated people around, putting on shows, doing records and fanzines, getting involved in political issues-and sticking around, not just "dropping out" at a specified age-and some real good bands. The fact that that I'm not into a lot of it is of no matter, cos that's just a matter of taste. The Horror doesn't really play gigs with many bands of a similar ilk-there are more "traditional" sounding bands of late that I like, like Nation of Finks. The "fast band" trend is coming to an end, so I guess everyone's waiting for the next thing to come along, and "we" do get caught up in that a lot in this country. England, Scotland, and Wales are relatively small compared to the US, so the bills tend to be a bit more mixed anyway, which I am a fan of-but sometimes you need to have that certain momentum going throughout a night.

Steve: I agree with Andy-the scene as a whole is good; there are gigs almost every night in Leeds. Not that I attend them all, as most don't suit my tastes, but regardless, it's cool. Still not enough traditional-sounding hardcore punk for my liking, though. I am a stubborn old man who likes what he likes.

MHR: I know that a few of you guys have wives and kids and such-how does that impact your ability to tour? And the fact that some of you are "older"-how do you find hardcore relating to your life now?

Andy: Arms and I are the band dads. The only aspect of the band that is does affect is touring. When we started The Horror, we knew this was always gonna be there, so we just get on with it. We know we can only tour for a very limited time each year, so we choose wisely where and when we go. We're all working, as I'm assuming Atko will have got himself a job as I'm writing this, and we all have different levels of commitment in terms of what we're doing work-wise, so that affects things also. Atko is the youngest member of the band, at 22. He was like touring the US with Voorhees at 17, so I guess we all think of him as being the same age as us. I'm 30 in a couple of weeks, Steve and Arms have already hit that barrier and are climbing, and Dave's 28. Punk is always gonna be a part of my life-I couldn't say that about "the scene" in general, because for the most part it always has really fucking bored me. I enjoy listening to the new bands that are coming through, and what they've got to say. I enjoy getting nostalgic about the old ones, because it represents my youth, forged friendships, politics, and growing up. I am too old to be worried about this "what he/she said" lark, and a lot of the time, and the scene does tend to revolve around this. I think that the scene in general is steadily becoming less politically minded and active, but by the same token I separated my politics from my music a long time ago. They occasionally meet in lyrics and writing, but I don't rely solely on music or "the scene" to fulfill my political goals. When I was younger this wasn't the case, cos I was turned on to the music because of the politics and the fuck-you, anti-authoritarian stance, and at the time, that was enough. I hope I've answered your question with this nonsense.

Steve: I'm 31 now and hardcore is still my life. I play in two bands that are plenty busy and I also co-run a hardcore/punk record store in Leeds called Out Of Step Records, which in my 9 to 5.

MHR: What's the song "Fuck the Romans" about?

Andy: OK, firstly, "Fuck the Romans" is meant to be tongue-in-cheek. It has to be said that my original thought was, I wanna write a song like "Fuck tha Police" by NWA but set it at around 55 BC-47 AD, from the perspective of an "indigenous" Briton. The serious aspect of the song is that there still persists in this country (and in other European countries, I'm sure) a frame of mind that suggests that there was no indigenous history or culture prior to the Roman occupation of these lands, which is completely untrue. If we look at it as we would today, it would be regarded as an invasion, with a clear distinction between the oppressor and the oppressed. The Romans get very good press in the history books, whereas the people whose land they occupied and "pacified" were all murderous barbarians. Is any of this sounding familiar? I can and do bore the shit out of people with this stuff all the time-the best thing would be to read the lyrics and draw your own conclusions.

MHR: Are there any curse words that Americans should be using more often?

Steve: Cunt. You people still fear that word.

Andy: "Tosser" is always a good one-i.e. "you fucking tosser," which basically means a wanker or jerk. Or "I don't give a toss," or even better: "I don't give a monkey's toss." Alternatively, "you fucking tosspot," denoting a pot where one would shoot one's jizz.

MHR: Back to the real questions, though, I remember in Belgium Andy talking about "Let's Get Regional" and saying that he wants to hear people on TV talk like him when reporting news to him. What's the deal with that situation?

Andy: When I say I want to hear people who sound like me on TV, that's the shortest and most basic way of explaining what the song's about. I try not to get into spending five minutes talking about the song when the song itself lasts less than a minute. "Let's Get Regional" is about how language is an important cultural influence and when we look at certain regions in the England and the rest of the UK, accent and dialect become "markers," in terms of how we identify people and where they come from. I know there's a whole wealth of regional accents and dialects in the US, but I don't believe they have the same kind of implications as in this country. There is, among some people, an opinion that if you have a certain accent then you're of a certain intellect, which of course is nonsense, but nonetheless it is something that is very much with us today. It's something I've experienced. I've heard people say it in conversation about someone else and it gets me fucking angry. With the huge technological advances of the last century and the huge media influences that go with it, certain accents and dialects are simply disappearing. There is a spread of "estuary English" (originating from London and the southeast of England, along the Thames and its estuary) due to TV and the media, and to an extent it's inevitable, but I prefer the diversity that these different accents and dialects bring. Again, I hope this has answered your question.

MHR: What can we expect to see from you guys in the future? Any tour plans?

Andy: OK, we're gonna record another ten-inch for Coalition at the beginning of March, called *First Blood Pt. 2.* I believe that to coincide with that, it's gonna come out on CD with "First Blood" on there also. After that, we'll get down to writing songs for a full-length. We'll continue to do as many shows at home that work, family, and other band commitments allow. Tour-wise, we're probably gonna look at Europe this year, hopefully Scandinavia, we'd also like to try and get to Spain for a long weekend-it's just getting the contacts. In the future we'd love to come back to the US, and we would love to do the west coast but we know how difficult that would be. It's something to think about for 2004.

MHR: Your last words?

Andy: Thank you for this interview, and for giving me worthwhile fucking questions and taking time to find out that I don't just ramble loads of bullshit when drunk, and can do it when sober also.

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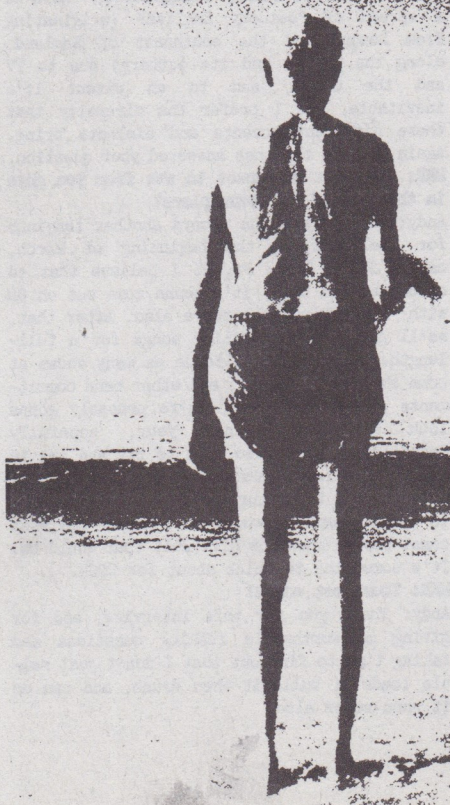

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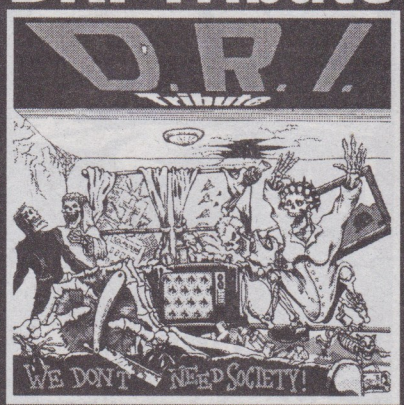

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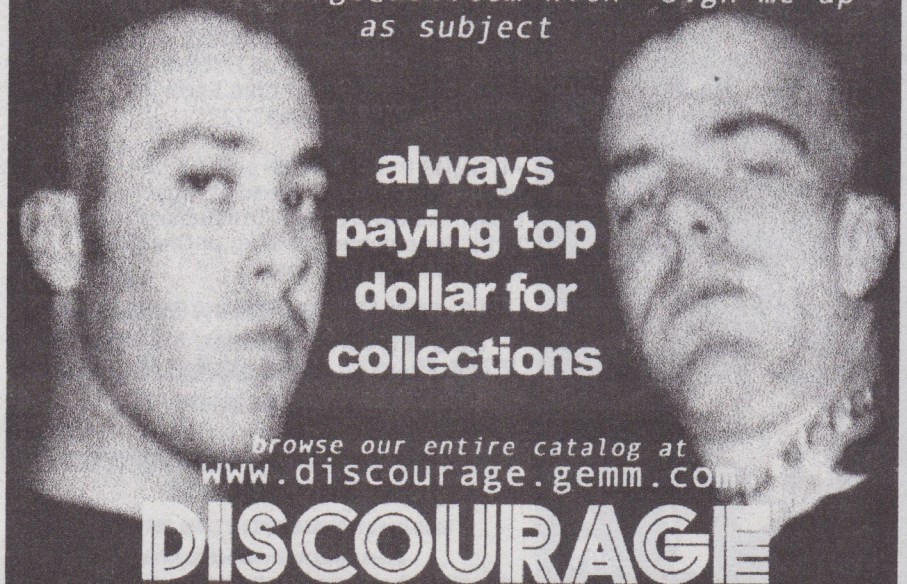

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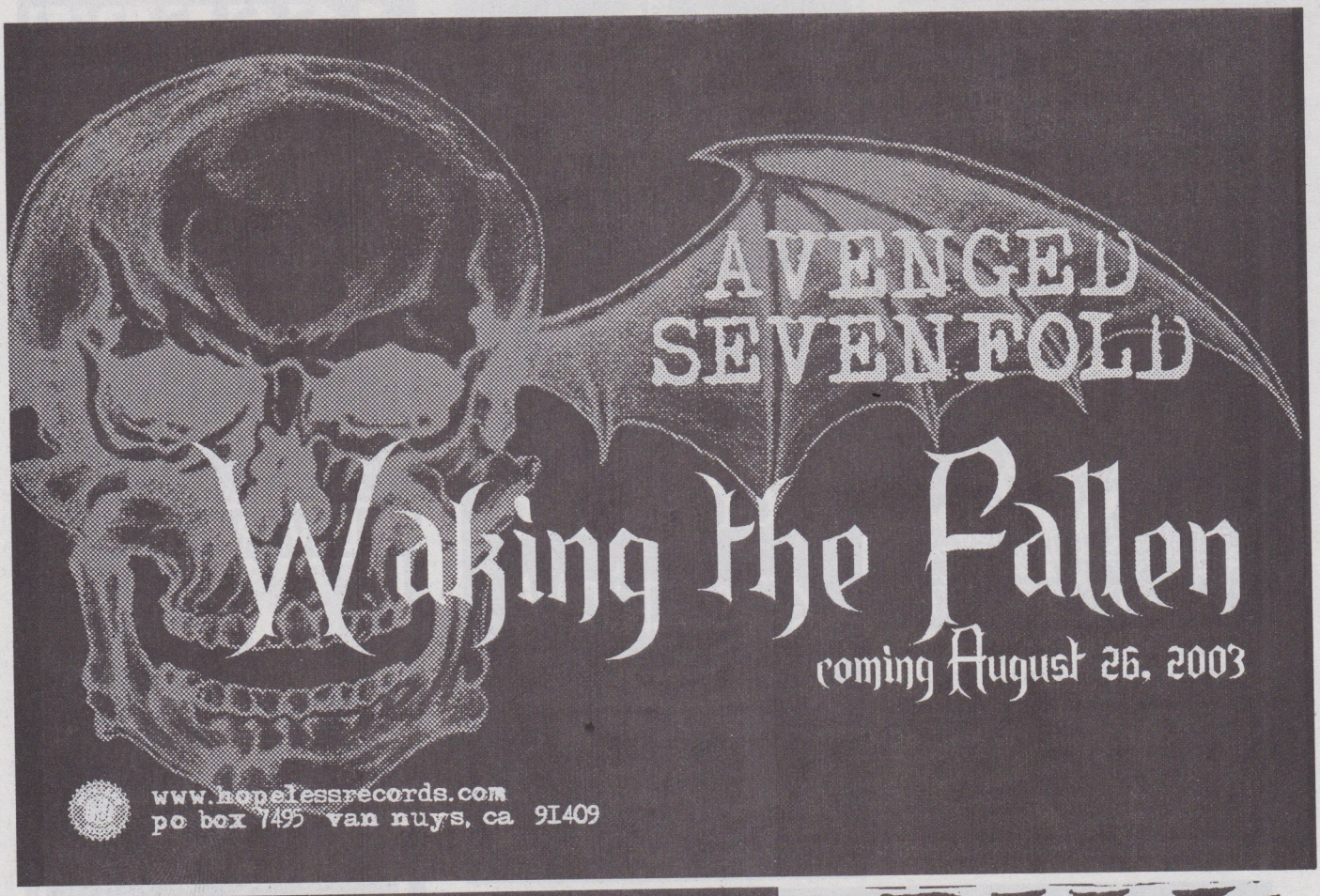

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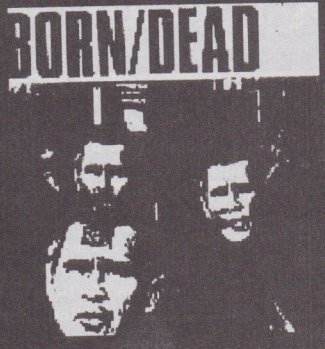

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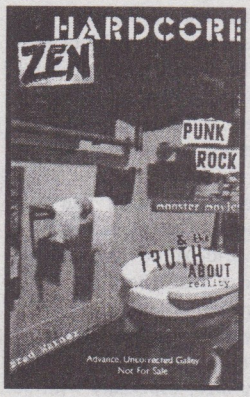


Hardcore Zen: Punk Rock, Monster Movies, and the Truth About Reality
Brad Warner
$14.95 • 206 pages
Wisdom Publications
199 Elm Street
Somerville, MA 02144
www.wisdompubs.org

When the *Maximum* coordinators sent me this book for review I had to write back to them and tell them how excited I was. I've never been much for Eastern philosophy, a bias that I'm sure comes directly from the way it's usually bastardized in Western culture, but I'm going through some big shit in my life right now and I'm looking for direction. OK, that sounds like I'm looking for a cult to join and had to write to the *MRR* coordinators to say thanks for the hook up, so let me rephrase. Basically, I'm manic-depressive and getting worse, and my recent divorce is a flashing red sign that I need to take a look at how I handle my relationships. I guess the ways I've been looking at the world for the last 20 or 25 years may not be working as well as I thought, and I should be open-minded about how other people in the world think about things.

So, at the same time that I'm asking a couple Catholic friends of mine about their faith, reading up on bipolar disorder, and rereading Joseph Campbell's *Masks of God* series, along comes Brad Warner's *Hardcore Zen*. Serendipitous. If this book had landed in my lap at any other time in my life, I may not have been so open-minded and willing to look at the actual merits of what Warner has to say. I'm sure I'd never have been open-minded enough to actually test out what Warner has to say by sitting cross-legged in front of a blank wall for twenty minutes like I did yesterday morning. OK, before you write me off as brainwashed and flip to the review of the new Tragedy LP, hear me out.

Hardcore Zen is one part autobiography and one part philosophy text. Warner, while more a part of that neo-60s psychedelic punk scene than the DIY scene I've always identified with, is still one of us. The life and the world that he talks about is one that most of us, especially those of us in our thirties, will recognize as ours, and when he talks about Zen, it's with a bluntness and acidic sense of humor that belongs to us as well. Most importantly, when Warner talks about Zen, he presents it in terms of punk values: thinking for yourself, not accepting authority, living now for now, and recognizing that everything we do is part of the world of shit we live in.

Zen is a philosophy of paradoxes and hard to explain in something as short as a review, but I'll try to describe Warner's main points. Keep in mind, though, that this is just what I got out of Hardcore Zen, and that, in typical Zen fashion, everyone who reads this book will get something totally different out of it.

The primary foundation of Warner's approach to Zen is that we only live now. The past is bullshit, as is the future. Memories or dreams. Unreal. What we actually experience are the millions of little moments flying by faster than we can notice them. It sounds so simple, but when you really try to apply this to everyday life, it actually does help straighten out a lot of shit. Let me give you an example.

As I already mentioned, I'm manic-depressive. When I'm either really up or really down (about 90% of the time), I wind up on obsessive head-trips that really fuck me up. I replay arguments and every shitty thing I've witnessed my whole life again and again in my brain. Or, I get caught up in really wanting—needing—something to happen. It could be a girl I need to see tonight or feeling like the show we're about to play has to go well. And politics are the worst. Who knows what the fuck Bush is going to do with half a brain and all that power?

According to Warner, when the Buddha said that all suffering comes from desire and that freeing yourself from desire frees you from suffering, this is what he was talking about. Gautama Buddha wasn't saying, "Never want anything." He was saying that you only have now. If you focus on the future or past, you miss out on the life you're actually living. And, if you get caught up in wanting things to be different—in the world, in your sex life, whatever—you'll only find that it doesn't really change things once you get what you think you want. There will always be something else to want until you live in the moment.

OK, it sounds simple and it sounds like bullshit (simple bullshit), but let me give you an example of how focusing on this actually helped me pull my head out of my butt the other night. I had gotten in a major argument with a friend of mine, to the point where we didn't think we'd be talking to each other again. Then, she called and said we should try to patch things up. I went out to meet her at a bar the next night, and on the way there, all I could think about was how fucked up things had gotten between us and about how sooner or later we were going to get in another big-ass argument. I thought about this whole Zen-thing of letting go—letting go of the past, letting go of my need to have everything work out, letting go of my fear that things wouldn't—and it worked. Getting rid of all that crap let me walk into the bar and just sit down and be myself.

Realize that most of you couldn't give a rat's ass about my trip to the bar the other night, but I don't know any punks without obsessions that drain their spirits and energies half the time. It's probably one of the few things we all have in common.

Another big point that Warner emphasizes repeatedly is that we're all part of the world and that our individual concepts of self are an illusion. I'm not going to get into this one. I'll just say that this is a part of the philosophy that is meant quite literally, that our individual identities don't exist. Beyond that, you'll have to read the book yourself and make up your own mind about whether or not that's an idea you can buy into.

Anyone who is at all familiar with Zen has noticed, I'm sure, that I haven't touched at all on the concept of enlightenment. There are actually a lot of topics Warner discusses that I don't have room to mention here—reincarnation, for one. But enlightenment is another one of those topics that I don't feel like I could discuss here without totally butchering. So, I'll just say that Warner's views on enlightenment are as down-to-earth as any could be.

Probably my favorite part of the book—and the part most of you out there would probably hate the most—was the section talking about "right action." No one wants to hear about morality and have someone else tell him or her what's right and wrong. But, there are two things that keep Hardcore Zen from being preachy or dogmatic. First off, Warner emphasizes that the "rules" of right action are meant to be broken. The "ten fundamental precepts," as they're known, are not like the Ten Commandments. They're not rules to be obeyed, they're guidelines. When the Buddha said not to kill other people, what he was saying was, "When people get killed, it usually makes the world a worse place, so it's usually a bad idea to kill people." My impression is that the Buddhist belief is that the fundamental precepts are just another way of seeing if your fucking up in your life and where you could get back into "balance."

The other thing about this Buddhist sense of morality that meshes with my view of the world is that it implies that everything we do has consequences. I'm not talking about that guilt-ridden way of looking at the

world that makes us feel like we've done a major wrong to the rest of humanity when we accidentally say "history" instead of "herstory." The way that Warner phrases it is that it's just as important to take care of your personal shit as it is to act on a global scale, it's just as important to clean the toilet and pick up cigarette butts off the floor of the punkhouse as it is to throw a riot when Bush arrives in town. It addresses that age-old questions, "Why are so many political punks such assholes to each other, and why are so many of the people with 'bad' politics such good, loyal friends?" While no one—not even a Zen master—can ever answer those questions, Warner does remind us that it doesn't do us any good at all to work for global change just to turn around and act like assholes to each other. (Are you listening, Portland?)

This sense of "right action," or to use Warner's phrase, "appropriate action," ties directly back to the idea of living in the now. There are times when we are hanging out at riots with the rest of the punks, giving the finger to the Man, but most of our lives are spent having to smell the urine on Mission Street or having to decide whether or not to act like a dick to the guy with the moustache and the mullet. Karma is immediate, we live now and that now is made up of the shit or beauty we create and recreate every moment.

I've heard that there's another Buddhist punk book that also came out recently. From what I've heard from friends who've read that book (and been privy to the promo material the publisher has sent out along with it), it's a piece of shit. So, make sure you get the title of this one straight—*Hardcore Zen: Punk Rock, Monster Movies, and the Truth About Reality*. This book is anything but a piece of shit and, if you have any kind of interest in philosophy of this sort, you should get it. It was interesting and managed to put across some pretty esoteric ideas in honest, down-to-earth language that showed how those ideas connect to our immediate lives. More than anything, it'll give you plenty to think about the next time you sit cross-legged, staring at a blank wall.
—Doug Grime

Punch and Pie
Edited by Felizon Vidad and Todd Taylor
154 pages • $7.95
Gorsky Press
PO Box 42024
Los Angeles, CA 90042

I had stopped doing book reviews for this fine magazine, but Arwen offered me a shot at *Punch and Pie* and I couldn't refuse. *Punch and Pie* is a collection of short stories put together by some *Razorcake* folks, and includes some of my favorite fairly unknown authors. This is well worth the money, if just to be able to tell your literary friends that you read some of these great writers before they got famous.

There's no overt theme in this collection, but the thread that ties the stories together is that they mostly tell unpretentious tales of people who haven't gotten things in life the easy way. It's a collection of people trying to make the best decisions possible with limited choices, of people not fitting in and noticing, and of small-scale adventures gone awry. These commonalties come out in different ways, in different writing genres, and in different time periods, but overall they present a work of serious, but very approachable, fiction.

Some names will be known to zinester and self-publishing folks: Jim Munroe who did the great zine *Holiday in the Sun* as well as publishing three novels, Madeleine Baran, aka Maddy from *Tight Pants*, Wred Fright who is a long time zine reviewer, and many writers who have been published, or help put out, the zine *Razorcake*, which rose from the ashes of *Flipside*.

Jim Munroe contributes a wonderful not-quite-horror story about sneaking into a closed subway station in Toronto. It's like a good issue of *Infiltration*, combining the desire to be where one is not supposed to be with the dynamics of friendship. At least until someone starts using secret subway codes ...

Madeleine Baran's piece "Parma Style" was so good that I was asking myself "Who is this person?" before I got through the first page. When I saw she was the *Tight Pants* Maddy, it all made sense. Her entry is a profile of a working class Midwestern family, their style and their family rituals. Like her zine, it's full of the her sense of humor. It's short, but manages to convey eccentricities and habits in a way that's full of familiarity and somewhat guarded love.

Jim Ruland contributes a terrific story of a slaughterhouse worker in late-1800s Chicago. The protagonist develops a taste for blood as he mixes through anarchist politics, rooming houses, bars, and the factory floor. Ruland sets the tone from the beginning: "This is a factory, the Floor Boss shouts to no one in particular, you're not killing cows, you're making meat!" Is it the work that makes the slaughterhouse worker crazy, or is it the working conditions? This is a historical piece, which like most good historical fiction, informs the reader of the issues and history in which the story is set.

Editor Felizon Vidad also contributes one of the longer and best pieces. Cousins go to a bridal shower and scavenger hunt. One is nursing a broken heart, the other is an old friend of the bride-to-be. The horrible party guests and the annoying denizens of Cocoa Beach bars provide a backdrop for relationship analysis and an exploration of family ties.

Ayn Imperato, Wred Fright, and Todd Taylor also contribute well-written pieces here. Like any collection of fiction, there are some pieces I didn't like, but overall the quality here is very high, especially with so many basically unpublished writers. It's certainly a great introduction to authors whose work hopefully will continue to appear in zines, magazines, and books in the coming years

There is one other thing I feel the need to mention though.

The reason that the phrase "Don't judge a book by it's cover" is a cliché is because people usually do just that. I never would have picked up *Punch and Pie* in a bookstore. The cover looks like a bad in-joke. I don't know if you can see its ghastly glory in that tiny little *MRR* scanned picture, but it's some dude in a messy room, holding a Bud and a cigarette and wearing big sunglasses. The "punch line" seems to be that he's wearing a skimpy, tight pink one-piece something-or-other. I've been showing it to others to make sure it's not just me and everyone's reaction has been one of three things: 1. "Yawn," "2. "Is that someone important on the cover? because I don't understand," or 3. the simple "Good god, that's ugly."

The cover almost begs people not to read this collection, which is a shame, both for the authors and for the photographer, Dan Monick, who has many pictures included in the book which could have made for a cover that doesn't scream, "Don't buy me!" But for everyone's best interests, just ignore the attempt at self-sabotage and enjoy the work included within. You could always put it inside a newspaper when you are reading it in public.
—Gordon Zola

Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict
Norman G. Finkelstein
288 pages • $20.00
Verso, 180 Varick Street,
New York, NY 10014-4606

In the Israel/Palestine situation, I lean towards the side of the Palestinians—although both sides have committed some completely fucked acts of war over the past 60 years. It's clear that regressive elements on both sides profit politically from being stubborn and stamping out attempts at compromise. For instance, there's the constant breaking of cease-fires and seemingly endless retaliatory attacks and bombings. Neither the Israeli side nor the Palestinian side is pure and innocent. To be blunt, both sides are drenched in each other's blood. But it's also clear that one side is using massive amounts of military might to crush and intimidate the other side, which has resorted to stone throwing, guerilla

attacks, and suicide bombings. A constant settlement program, in contradiction to numerous United Nations resolutions, is being expanded and augmented by the meandering wall now being built by Israel.

Much like the still-simmering Northern Ireland situation, the Israel-Palestine war can continue forever if no leaders on either side have the balls to stand up and demand a peaceful solution. The old stereotypes of the PLO vowing to drive the State of Israel into the Mediterranean Sea are outdated now—both the Palestinian government and the Arab League (!) have specifically recognized Israel's right to exist. Unfortunately the reverse is now apparently true: Israel seems to want to occupy all of Palestine by bisecting it or by invading it in search of terrorists. The Likud nut-jobs now running Israel continue to pour fellow Zionist extremists into Palestine by establishing and supporting settlements. A mixture of Israeli-only highways, border crossings, and now the wandering wall point to a deliberate attempt to annex as much of the rest of Palestine as possible. I call the new wall "the wandering wall" because it wanders way off the course of the Green Line—the 1967 borders of Israel that seem to be internationally considered as the once-and-future border between the two countries—into Palestine, encircling entire Palestinian towns.

This book puts forward the proposition that the Likud's intention to occupy all of Palestine is not a new one, and in fact the expulsion of all non-Jews from a Greater Israel (stretching to Syria or beyond) is a major part of mid-century Zionist ideology, among a lot of other propositions.

I have no idea if Finkelstein's version of history is close to the truth or not. I know almost nothing about the origins and struggles of the Israelis and the Palestinians pre-1980. I've always had hints and inklings about the origins based on how the countries interact with each other and with the UN and the USA. Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict gave me much more information and is real helpful to someone like me who's pretty up-to-date with current events but whose mid-century Middle East history is pretty thin.

The book's general method is to use Zionist and Israeli and contemporary sources to debunk popular and historic misconceptions about the establishment of the State of Israel, the Zionist movement, the "Right of Return," and the various wars and peace agreements since Israel's official establishment in 1948. In doing so, it also sheds a lot of light on the underlying ideology and history for under-educated products of the US educational system like me. Even if Finkelstein's a dupe for the extremist Palestinian guerilla group Hamas—which is pretty unlikely—his addiction to full footnotes and extensive quotations and clear, concise analysis make this book a good starting place to explore the controversial conflict.

In the mid-1940s, the British (who ruled Palestine at the time) imposed a curfew because of extremist Zionist terror attacks intended to hurry the formation of a Jewish state. The curfew made Zionist settlers, who were mostly not extremists, prisoners in their own homes. The comparison to today's repeated Israeli lock-downs of entire Palestinian cities and towns is obvious and inescapable. This episode is discussed in the introduction, along with a scathing denunciation of the collective punishment by David Ben-Gurion, one of the founding fathers of Israel and a major Zionist figure. His denunciation could easily have been from today's Israeli peace groups or from any one of a number of current Palestinian groups.

Zionism is defined by the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (a pro-Israeli government group) as "the national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel" (www.us-israel.org). This coincides with Finkelstein's definition, although he finds a lot of problems with the perceived and the actual context and effects of the Zionist movements that led up to the establishment of Israel.

For instance, one of the book's most interesting and controversial features is the author's continual comparison and contrast of various Zionist (and later Israeli government) actions to other historical events. Specifically, he analyzes the similarities and the dissimilarities of the colonization of North America by the US to the eventual conquest of Palestine by the Zionists. He also details Hitler's obsession with the US conquest of our continent with his invasion of Poland and Czechoslovakia and the insertion of German citizens into their former homeland. He then contrasts Hitler's actions and intentions with those of the radical Zionists who suffered extremely under Hitler's fascist dictatorship. Again, there are chilling similarities in the attitudes of Hitler towards the Slavs and of Zionists towards the Arabs.

Finkelstein examines one of the major underpinnings of Zionism: that there is an exclusivist homeland that the Jewish people have a right to occupy. He quotes Anita Shapira, a historian, author, and professor of the Study of Zionism at Tel Aviv University, that "the 'Romantic-exclusivistic' (sic) brand of nationalism that purported that 'blood ties, common ethnic origin', etc. not citizenship or 'agreement', were the proper foundations of community." Finkelstein goes on to contrast the Germanic nationalists who swept to power in Germany in 1933 to the Zionists. He does not say that the Zionists were Nazis with yarmulkes, but he does highlight more disturbing similarities between the two radical nationalist movements.

Another comparison that leapt to my mind would be the various racial extremists in the US—the White Power creeps and the Black Nationalists would happily self-segregate if they had a chance to impose their particular intolerant world-view on the rest of us. This exclusive cultural/racial/religious identity approach to nation-building is in my view (and apparently Finkelstein's) an inappropriate model for a free society.
There are different strains of Zionism, and while Finkelstein does not go too far into depth about the differences, it's clear that not all Zionists were Irgun Zevai Le'ummi (IZL)—the radical Zionist guerilla group commanded by a future Prime Minister of Israel, Menachem Begin. (According to the Encyclopedia Britannica on-line (www.britannica.com), the IZL "advocated force in the establishment of a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan River... its activities included a 1946 attack on the King David Hotel, leaving 91 dead, and a 1947 raid on an Arab village in which all 254 inhabitants were killed."). What seems to be consistent throughout the Zionist world-view, whether right wing, socialist, labor, or whatever, is the determination to establish a majority or exclusively Jewish state in Palestine.

This book covers a huge number of issues, often by presenting an allegedly flawed book like Joan Peters's From Time Immemorial and contrasting the work's allegations with facts and complete quotations from various contemporary and historical sources.

I've only scratched the surface of the answers that this book purports to supply. For someone like me who's still trying to figure out the right questions to ask, this book is a very helpful examination of diverse sections of the Israel-Palestine problem. For the rest of us, it's a solid compendium of quotes, footnotes, and facts connected by clear, concise writing which will no doubt fuel hours and hours of impassioned debate. Dig in!
—Jesse Luscious

Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980s
by Chin-tao Wu
392 pages • $17.00
Verso • 180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606

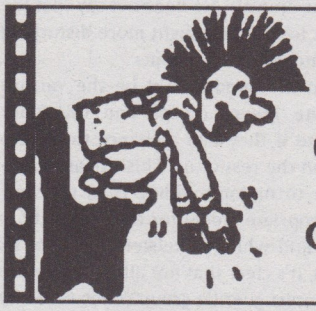
This book would be great comedy if it wasn't so goddamn tragic and true. I mean, CEOs calling art "sexy" and trying to get down with the bohemians is funny as hell. Well, funny as having the bosses choose the art for the cafeteria. Regrettably, such scenarios are not just the stuff of my sketch comedies.

In the 80s, Thatcher and Reagan's structural changes have made museum investment and sponsorship both profitable and humane-seeming for companies. Couple that with funding cuts for the arts, and you see what a rough spot today's museums are in. As the lines between advertising and art blur, so do the traditional roles.

Chin-Tao Wu makes many convincing arguments in Privatising Culture, detailing the large and awkward price we pay in putting the funding onus on corporations.

Privatising Culture is a specific study of a specific field, but the implications spread as ugly and undeniable as American foreign policy.
—Travis Fristoe.

MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

WHEN YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE MORAL HIGH ROAD, THAT CAN BE VERY DANGEROUS

Is it possible to know too much about your favorite band? I say yes. I usually skim interviews. I don't want to meet people in bands. I prefer to let the music speak for itself. It should be what we are concentrating on, even though I know that most people need the image or the gossip to make a band complete. **Ramones: End Of The Century** dishes all the dirt anyone could ever need on the inner workings of the Ramones.

I was really surprised to discover some thing in **Ramones: End Of The Century** that my friends and I did not know about the Ramones. SPOILER ALERT! Actually, I was shocked at the revelation that Johnny stole Joey's girlfriend and they didn't speak to each other for eighteen years because of it. I never knew Joey wrote "The KKK Took My Baby Away" about Johnny. I definitely have a different response when I listen to it now. I felt kind of bad because all I could think was how is it possible that they stayed in the band together for that long and did not speak to each other. The thing is, Johnny is still married to her, but his callousness makes it hard to take. He states matter-of-factly that he didn't call Joey when he was dying because he wouldn't have wanted someone to call him after not speaking for so long just because he was dying. His reasoning sort of makes sense, but it is still unbelievable.

The screening I attended, the second of only two sold-out ones in San Francisco, was the rowdy one. People had been waiting in line for hours. There was a lot of drinking going on. The doors didn't open on time. When they did, a local radio person tried to make some jokes through the taunts and screams of the impatient crowd. The director tried to say a few words, but the crowd was sick of waiting. The film started 45 minutes late. Naturally, the rowdiness continued through the film. I am sure I missed a least half of what was being said because someone in the audience had to let everyone know that he recognized Joe Strummer or whoever else was on screen. It was pretty annoying. Hopefully, I'll get to see it again so I can hear all that I missed.

What I did see of **Ramones: End Of The Century** was pretty great. Directors Jim Fields and Michael Gramaglia seemed to get some brutally honest interviews with the members of the band. If Johnny Ramone ever writes his autobiography, I'll be sure to read it. He doesn't like anyone. There is also some great live footage. It is grainy, blurry, there are stock numbers in the middle because no one has paid for the rights to use it, the sound is hard to hear, but you get to see the early days. One particularly great moment when the freshly formed band is on stage at CBGB's and they are fighting over which song they want to do. It is a short fight and I am sure the few people at the show didn't even notice it. Yet, seeing the Ramones like this is a side I never saw. I've seen them many times over the years and I've assumed they always had their set list memorized.

The documentary starts with Tommy driving in car to the neighbor were the Ramones grew up. I personally feel the rock documentary needs to stop filming people while driving in a car. It's done so much and seems to have no real purpose, other than they are taking you to were it all begin. Can't that be done some other way? Tommy points out were each member lived, all within shouting distance of the other. This close proximity and their shared enjoyment of the MC5 and The Stooges started it all.

Ramones: End Of The Century covers their entire career, following the Ramones through the early years in New York, success in England, recording with Phil Spector, Dee Dee's stint as a rapper, and their induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. It's too bad the Ramones aren't the most successful band ever. I don't blame them for being bitter, and it sure makes a good film.

Politics suck. By the time you read this Arnold Schwarzenegger may be governor of California and I will have probably moved to another state. I am trying not to think about it, but the frustration with the way this country is run still drives me crazy. I am sure that is why **Weather Underground** struck such a strong chord with me. **Weather Underground** documents the activities of the Weathermen throughout the late 60s and early 70s as seen through the members' eyes in the present day. The contradictions and possibly their uneasiness with their now normal lives shows through.

The Weathermen were the radical faction of the Students for a Democratic Society. When the SDS began to self-destruct in 1969, the Weathermen took over bringing it to a more radical level. Their goal was the violent overthrow of the government. They saw revolution happening all over the world and were inspired by the Black Panthers. They felt that revolution in America was due. The US government was lying to the people about Vietnam and killing millions of Americans and Vietnamese. Something had to be done to stop it. As one member reflects from the present day, "When you think you have the moral high road, that can be very dangerous."

The strength of the **Weather Underground** is the combination of current interviews with members of the group and amazing archival footage of events. Many of the events I have only heard about; The Days of Rage in Chicago, the people viewing Black Panther Fred Hampton's murder scene and the many bombings the group pulled off. The film paints a great picture of what was happening during this time.

Of course, the easiest discrediting of the Weathermen is that they were middle class white kids. What did they know about suffering or even revolution? It seems like near the end when they went underground that they really did give up a lot for their beliefs. They had some admirers. "We didn't do it but we dug it," a hippie tells a news crew after the bombing of the Capitol men's room. They did manage to break Timothy Leary out of jail. Now that they are back in the real world, no one seems to have any regrets about what was done, but with the advantage of hindsight they may have gone about it differently.

The Weathermen took their name from a lyric in the Bob Dylan song *Subterranean Homesick Blues:* "You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows." What a perfect segue into my final film for the month. **Masked And Anonymous,** a fictional film starring Bob Dylan as a folk musician. This film got such bad reviews after it played at Sundance; I could not pass up a chance to see it when it came to San Francisco. There is something that always fascinates me about a film that evokes such a negative reaction out of people.

I am not a Bob Dylan fan, but **Masked And Anonymous** seemed like someone just wanted to make a film inspired by Dylan's lyrics. In fact, there is a rumor that Dylan wrote the script. At points it doesn't make sense or goes off on a bizarre tangent, but that's not necessarily a bad thing.

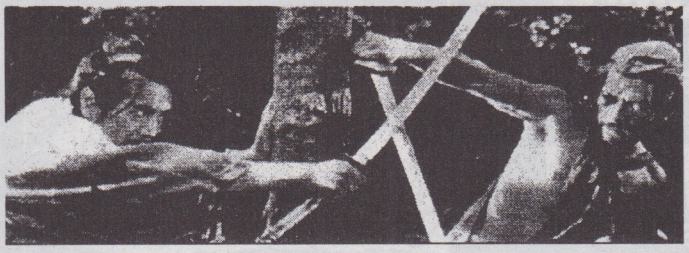
Masked And Anonymous is set in a fictitious country run by a dictator and torn apart by civil war. Dylan plays legendary singer Jack Fate. Fate is released from jail to do a benefit concert. The concert is supposed to raise money to help with medical supplies for people who are dying in the street, but may also be a front to raise money to pay off the debts of promoter Uncle Sweetheart. On the way to the concert Fate encounters a bunch of interesting characters. There is a lot of stuff going on and Fate just seems to walk through it all, drifting from person to person. He listens to people as they spout their philosophies and thoughts to him, then he walks on to the next person. The big climax should come when Fate confronts the dictator, but it just seems like another thing that he had to do that day.

Masked And Anonymous drags at parts, but mostly it is enjoyable.

It takes place in one day and is all stream of consciousness ramblings. It is like watching a Dylan song. As Pagan Lace says when listening to Fate perform, "I like his songs because they are not precise. They are open to interpretation." You may not like that one, but don't worry, because the next one will start in a couple of minutes.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



HEY, HO! OH, NO!

It's natural and maybe a little unrealistic to expect that a documentary covering the Ramones should be as great as the band itself. In **The Ramones: End of the Century**, directors Michael Gramaglia and Jim Fields aren't as encyclopedic as the upcoming MC5 doc, or as slick as the Clash's. But the film turns out to be a remarkably accurate, funny, and sometimes wrenching portrait of a band that's always been too far ahead of its time for its own good.

It opens with the Ramones' 1999 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Joey having recently passed away), then spins back almost thirty years, with a fascinating tour of the band's New York roots.

At the beginning of the 70s, most good pop music suddenly and inexplicably just died. As Tommy Ramone laments, the scene was very "gray." Iggy and the Stooges deeply impressed the boys with their raw power approach (this influence would hypercharge the Ramones' early output). A little later, glam surfaced—and the boys started snapping up records by Gary Glitter and Slade (at their own risk, given the stigma attached to any band that has guys in lipstick and earrings). They even dressed the part on weekends (though they had nowhere to go). But as Johnny says, they lived in a neighborhood that was run-down enough so that they could hang out and claim it as their own.

One night, Johnny was astonished when introverted Joey transformed his image overnight as the lead vocalist for a forgotten band called Sniper. Sniper dropped him after only a few weeks.

When the Ramones eventually coalesced as a band, their music was an aberration. At CBGB's, Patti Smith Group or Blondie would get the lucrative weekend gigs, while the Ramones would be relegated to the dreaded Monday and Tuesday night slots. These early gigs were infamous events in rock 'n' roll theater. The band would spit out a few songs, storm off stage, then start playing again without explanation. On stage, they'd argue about which songs to play, put it to a vote, and then the loser might go into a snit in front of whatever crowd there was. And then there was the music—a white-hot blaze that might last all of fifteen minutes; staff and habitues of CBGB's would be left with your jaws hanging. The band eventually developed enough promising material to interest Sire Records, and soon, *they* were getting the weekend gigs—and Johnny made sure they got paid every last penny.

The Ramones' first English tour is seen as a turning point in punk history. Their three-chord ethic inspired scores of current bands, and started a plethora of new ones. (At one show, the Ramones helped the Pistols sneak in through a back window, Johnny Rotten worrying all the while whether the Ramones were going to beat him up.)

Much has been made of the role social protest played in expanding punk's popularity in the US; their reception in Latin America is proof positive. In one segment filmed in Brazil, the Ramones play to a stadium of over 100,000 screaming kids with less of a future than any of John Lydon's audiences. Frenzied crowds of street kids would mob the band's limo almost as if they were the original Fab Four.

This documentary succeeds less as a definitive history of the band than as a penetrating personality study. For many, it may be their first chance to see the band stripped of their cartoon record cover image and shown as human beings. Joey (shy, and a romantic at heart), Dee Dee (ditzy and druggy), Johnny (a "one-punch" fighter, disciplined to the point of being called a "nazi" by the other band members); and Tommy (level-headed and given to stress) come across as three-dimensional characters in a tragicomic rock 'n' roll story.

Despite their posthumous Hall of Fame recognition, the band would never achieve the commercial success bands like Green Day, Nirvana and Rancid would take for granted. At one point, Johnny acknowledged to himself that the band would never be big, but with his focused work ethic, he digs in for the long haul anyway.

The Ramones: End of the Century is both funny and sad, the kind of film no fan could possibly miss; several of the scenes are priceless. Yes, it probably could have been longer and more comprehensive...but maybe we should be grateful for what we have.

In their early days, many punks were comfortable saying that the Clash was "the only band that matters." I'm not sure if that was ever the case, but **The Clash: Westway to the World** helps clarify the band's legacy.

It's also flashier, lighter, and more technically accomplished than the Ramones documentary, incorporating excellent interviews, live footage, and stylistic flourishes to the project.

The boys had the usual influences—The Stones and Heartbreakers chief among them. At this very low point in British history, many were unemployed and on the dole, and the only direction for the likes of those who didn't fit the mold was art school. In the band's words, it was "the last resort of malingerers." But it was a good place to connect with fellow malingerers, and this is the soil from which the earliest punk bands sprouted.

The Clash's story is told chronologically, but mostly in short anecdotes. Some are forgettable, others incredibly revealing. In their infamous first gig, one critic said they were "one of those bands that should be left in the garage, with the motor on." The Clash themselves concur that their first days were hardly promising.

It was the Ramones tour that lit the British punk scene on fire. The idea that *anybody* could put together a band, and a great one at that, was a revelation for them. After the tour, The Clash learned all the Ramones' songs in a month.

The British scene always had one thing that the US did not: a firm anchorage in desperation. "No Future" wasn't just a slogan. As a result, The Clash's songs were always able to dip into that wellspring of youthful dissatisfaction that fuels all good protest music. While some say that punk died when the Clash was signed to CBS, their first LP remains one of the early British scene's most cogent and articulate protest albums. The band goes into detail on many of these songs.

For example, the Clash was actually a part of the infamous "White Riot," an actual event that expressed solidarity with black protesters. The band, however, were a little less successful with the hooliganism that followed; after several attempts, they just gave up on trying to a car on fire.

In their early shows, Joe reminisces; it would be impossible to play without being covered with gob. Run-ins with the teddy boys (the rockabilly battalion) were a fact of life. Reggae, says Strummer, was frequently be played by deejays during punk gigs (as it was in the States).

The late Joe Strummer is featured in the majority of the interview segments—a smart move. At every point, Strummer can barely suppress his spontaneous enthusiasm for rock 'n' roll. Even when describing the zeigeist of the *Sandinista* triple LP, he muses that he wouldn't change it for the world. While the record lacked consistency, it was also amazingly gutsy—an exploration of new styles that no punk band had even conceived of trying.

Strummer does, however, seem to regret the ghastly *Combat Rock*. (Strangely enough, the album hit the US top ten, and paved the way for an important appearance on *Saturday Night Live*.) At this point, the band itself was starting to suffer from internal fractures, and as new members were auditioned, the chemistry of the old Clash was lost forever. Strummer seems troubled over this, but the overall success of his career hasn't left much room for regret.

Lasting just 82 minutes, one gets the feeling that the film could have included more uninterrupted concert footage, especially from early shows. After all, many of these events happened during punk's halcyon period, with many if its most colorful personalities. As it is, **The Clash: Gateway to the West** is still a tight piece of filmmaking, sharp enough to have earned a Grammy award and the affection of many fans. At the very least, it should inspire you to dig into your collection to dredge up a few vinyl memories.

Reactions? Email me at sjspinali@yahoo.com.

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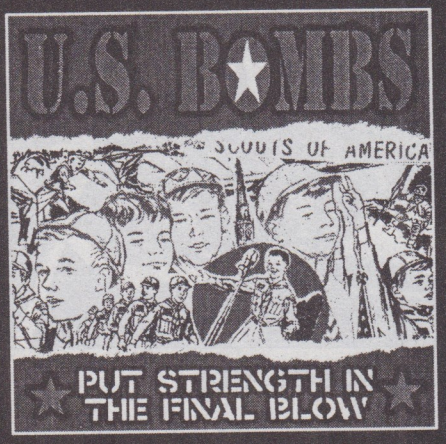

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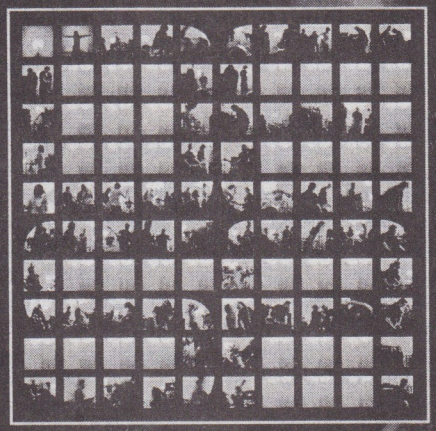

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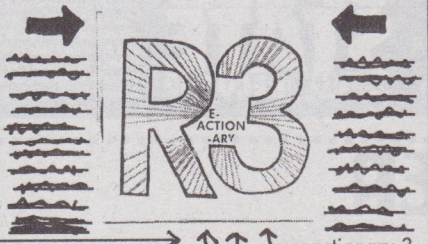

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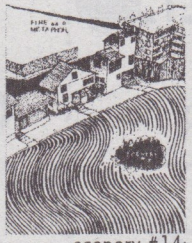

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Thanks to all who helped on the R3 tour.
maybe later: true north / r3 split (?); we don't go to their parties (2) comic; slang recording (?); fiction; recipes; the question of bombs (split zine); silence & mildew (library zine); another van; & any other project that might save us.

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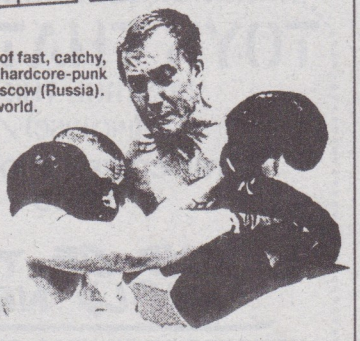

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2¢ WORTH - "United States of Hysteria" CD

So much for my senile memory. I thought these guys were utter crap. Mebbe I'm thinking of 2CENTS, or 5¢ DEPOSIT?! Regardless, these guys are actually really rather excellent. Musically and lyrically, they tread pretty similar territory as early BAD RELIGION or later PENNYWISE. And they do it well, and with a sense of humor to go with the thesaurus. Eight new cracking tracks, and 13 more bonus "greatest hits" from their back catalog, which sound damn fine too. (RK)
(AVD, www.avdrecords.com)

AGENT 51 – "The Red and the Black" CD

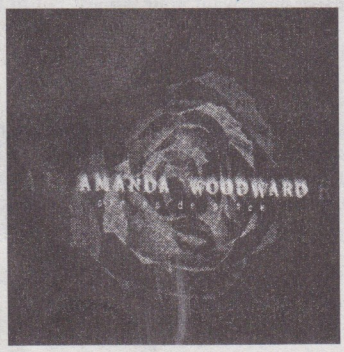
Decently produced punky rock pop with lots of hooks and guitar. A punk WEEZER or a pop BAD RELIGION? There are lots a slightly-altered AC/DC riffs too. A ready-for-the-big-time rock sound that sounds pretty good for now. (RL)
(Surfdog, 1126 South Coast Highway 101, Encinitas, CA 92024, www.agent51rocks.com)

AGIGTATORS / HEARTACHES – split EP

Man the HEARTACHES' first song on this split is a ripping number that sounds like it could have been off of the SWINGIN UTTERS *Streets of San Francisco* LP. Their second song isn't as strong, but still carries a definite UTTERS feel. The AGITATORS have a sound that could be categorized as a more generic GC5. Not a must-have, but this is not a bad pickup for the HEARTACHES side. (JF)
(Rock 'n' Roll Radio, Oostanghamsesteenweg 129, b-3581, Beverio-Beringen, BELGIUM, www.rock-nrollradio.org)

ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT – "Train Ride" EP

From the masterminds behind *Scam* 'zine, Pirate Punx, SF Street Wars, BART Station shows and countless other acts of brilliant punk rock mayhem, comes ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT. The music is simple but catchy, Ivy's voice is amazing, low and soulful, and her lyrics are thoughtful and introspective except when she's pissed ("Fuck You Motherfucker" about says it all). Includes a lyric book with artwork and tales about moving cross-country and getting arrested for grafitti-ing. (DP)
(Half-Day, PO Box 3381, Bloomington, IN 47402)

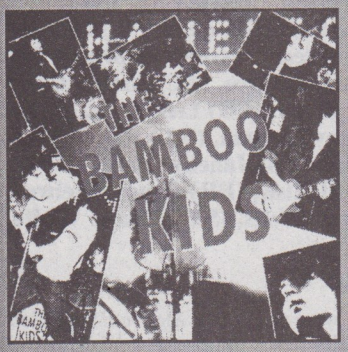


ALLERGIC TO BULLSHIT – "What We're for is What We'll Get" EP

I am torn on this release. On one hand you have one of the raddest, most fun bands in the Bay Area, if not the entire scene. On the other, you have a record that doesn't capture any of it. Where there is bounce and Ivy's fun vocals at their shows, this record is replaced by wailing and more bluesy sound that sort of reminds me of the GITS. This isn't so bad, but when you are expecting and craving cake, you do not want to be given pie. All in all, a good but disappointing release. (JF)
(Left Off The Dial, PO Box 3941, Oakland, CA 94609)

GG ALLIN & ANTISEEN – "Murder Junkies" LP

……..early 90s recordings…..not very moving….not even a bowel-movement…real meat-head music…good for glue sniffers……!!! Actually, this record's *only* redemption is the straight-up in-your-face homosexuality……GG ALLIN and ANTISEEN are both worth a thousand strokes in the locker room at the YMCA…..I just love the smell of butthole in a hairy man's beard…. (SW)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303 Richmond, VA 23221, www.tkorecords.com)



AMANDA WOODWARD – "Pleine de Grace" EP

AMANDA WOODWARD, from France, let loose with three mid-tempo bursts of passion and fury. Heavily rhythmic and melodic emo-core with a serious DC influence. It's catchy yet harsh, and seems to steer clear of the melodramatic screamo cliches. (VH)
(Code of Ethics, 10101 Orange Ranch, Tucson, AZ 85742, codeofethicsrecs@hotmail.com)

THE ANSWER - "Don't Wait Up" EP

This is probably one of the better records that Excursion has released as of late. The CHAMPION influence is undeniable here, especially with all arpeggios and octaves scattered throughout the record. When a good hardcore record is knocking at your door, open up and let it in. Seattle's the ANSWER is knocking (it's those shitty hardcore bands that tend to lean on the doorbell). (CC)
(Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102)

ANTEENAGERS M.C. AND FRIENDS – LP

An interesting concept album. The debut record from a couple of x-STEVE & THE JERKS that includes a tribute to the band by fellow Parisian bands on the B-side. It's actually quite funny in a dumb sort of way. ANTEENAGERS M.C. have lost the punk urgency of STEVE & THE JERKS. The songs have more of a 60s garage feel with a good sense of humor. Song titles like "Kryspy Kreme Love Theme" (who doesn't love donuts?) and "Where's Billy Idol Now" are fun and catchy. They also cover DEVO, TUBEWAY ARMY, and MUSIC MACHINE. They're all over the place. The bands on the tribute side are the WANGS, OPERATION S., BLUTT, FRUSTRATION, REAL GONE DADDIES, LES DRAGUEURS, LES TERRIBLES, and MEN IN THE MOON. There certainly are a bunch of great bands in Paris. (CK)
(no label)

ASSAULT – CD

Six-song CD of solid Japcore. Not as heavy as some, and not D-beat, just good—the good ol' classic sound. Like most people here at *MRR,* I have a soft spot in my place for the Japanese version of hardcore, and ASSAULT feeds it just fine. (JF)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi Mansion, Yayoi-cho2-7-15, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, JAPAN)

ASSCHAPEL – "Fire & Destruction" LP

ASSCHAPEL, who are from Memphis, Tennessee, blast through 12 tracks of hard-charging crust that has hints of metal showing up throughout the the songs. There are a good variety of tempos found here, and the production is super heavy, matching the deep and brutal throat-searing vocals. The lyrics could have only come from somebody who apparently plays way too many hours of Dungeons and Dragons while listening to MANOWAR. Try this on for size: "We stood for seven days in rain / We left the seven tired cities slain / When the wind screams through the streets over rose-red soaked concrete / Grasp the blade of might / The dull steel forged by fire / The blood will spill as you unleash your hate and kill / I'll drag you down to where our souls die." (RC)
(Hungry Ghost, PO Box 620241, Middleton, WI 53562)

THE ATOMSMASHERS – "Drop the Bomb" LP

……hmmmm….Italian punk rock…..not as good as TAXI…..hell, even the GRABBIES are better than these guys!!!!!! This is one of them punk-by-the-numbers jobs…..a record stuck in one speed is *boring* to me and any other sensible music fan……these days there's no room for hamburger!!!!! When are the people gonna start demanding some real *steak*!!!!!!!!!!!! Fuck all this McDonalds music!!!!!!!!!!!! (SW)
(Rip Off, 581 Maple Ave, San Bruno, CA 94066, www.ripoffrecords.org)

ATROX VS. EAVES – split CD

Not exactly a battle royale. This split CD brings together ATROX and EAVES… Two equally forgettable bands whose undistinguishable styles turn out to be more of a cafeteria food fight. The discordant guitars of ATROX can be interesting and EAVES hold my attention with their melodies, but neither band can let go of their chugga-chugga metal tendencies as they drag my ears through 17 tired tracks of mid-paced screamo. (VH)
(Rockstar, Verbindungsstrasse 9, 52080 Aachen, GERMANY)

AUGUST PREMIER – "Fireworks and Alcohol" CD

This record screams "Show Me the Money!" Boring, watered, poppy bullshit that is somehow going to get reviewed in this issue of *MRR*, even though they have nothing to do with punk except they have a couple of tattoos and drank a beer once. I am sure these guys want your money, but in truth, the guy who wants to buy heroin deserves it more. (JF)
(Fueled By Ramen, PO Box 12563, Gainesville, FL 32604)

BAGS – "Disco's Dead" EP

Never before scoped tracks from one of the titans of California garage-level punk, circa 1978. The title track is an unreleased demo that would have fit just fine on that anti-disco comp from 1980, but the two live tracks on the flip suffer from a sound quality that muffles the finest aspect of the BAGS appeal, Alice Bag's incredibly malevolent vocal sneer. Truly, Alice Bag's vocals are a blueprint for female angry-brainiac vox for any decade. We must wait for a full-on BAGS treatment to hear them proper-like. (RW)
(Artifix, PO Box 641, Moreno Valley, CA 92556-0641)

BAMBOO KIDS – "Suck the Life Out of Me / Right On"

Wow, this is really good. It actually reminds me a bit of later ZEROS with a little ANDY G thrown in. Maybe I'm way off, but nevertheless this is some good rock 'n' roll. This sounds like something Get Hip would release and I mean that in a good way to all parties involved. (BM)
(Pro-Vel, www.provelrecords.com)

BEEHIVE & THE BARRACUDAS - "In Dark Love" LP

San Diego's group of one-time superstars come back with another wayward platter of choppy pop and synth soul. Departing from the guitar sound more prominently featured on their previous release and relying more heavily on the Casio keyboard (hand clap feature included) hunt and peck stylings that greatly endears this reviewer. Certainly not rock and definitly not roll, I do believe the fat controller let his guard down when admitting this one. If you like the idea of WIRE, GANG OF FOUR, GARY NUMAN, and ESG all rolled up into a big messie ball, then I guess you'll love this. (SD)
(Swami, PO Box 620428, San Diego, CA 92162, **www.swamirecords**.com)

BETERCORE – "Youthcrust Discography" CD

Oh man, you should have seen my face when I first put in this record. Utter confusion. Which was followed by maniacal laughter and finally some serious banging of the head. Pretty cool, they totally faked me out by sampling in some seriously nerdy new wave computer sounding "bleep" noises, before exploding into some raw as fuck punk rock. Total super fast hardcore punk rock attack from the Netherlands. Totally pubescent and totally angry as fuck. Shit yeah, good job guys. (LG)
(Betercore, c/o Geert-Jan Davelaar Smaragd 11, 1703 Ga Heerhugowaard, NETHERLANDS)

BETWEEN THE LINES – "Wake Up Call" LP

This is fast modern hardcore with a strong nod to Bridge 9 bands like RIGHT BRIGADE and later SICK OF IT ALL (yes, SOIA has a 7" coming out on Bridge 9). Everything about this record is solid, from the recording to the musicianship. There is a strong metal hardcore influence in the production from the thok-sounding snare to the EARTH CRISIS bass sound. The vocalist even sounds like Karl Crisis at times. Still don't let that scare you away from this Belgian 5-piece. This is good hardcore. The only thing that rubbed me the wrong was their glossy photo and press kit included with the record. (CC)
(RocknRollRadio, Oosthamsesteenweg 129, 3581 Beverlo-Beringen, BELGIUM)

BLACKSTAR BRIGADE – "The Think They Can Knock Us Down" CD

Great fucking shit from these Austin, Texas punx—it calls to mind the great first SWINGIN' UTTERS, RANCID, and WASTED LPs. Totally rocking and catchy songs, with a great multi-layered vocal attack that just pushes it over the edge when combined with the massive production on this disc. Thumbs up! (MT)
(PO Box 41452, Austin, TX 78704, www.blackstarbrigade.com)

BLACK SOUL CHOIR – "Cardinal Tennessee" CD EP

Four OK songs sorta sounding like BLACK CAT MUSIC with a nod towards MODEST MOUSE and a hint of JAWBOX. Then the fifth song just blew this whole fucking CD with some really revolting sounding imitation RADIOHEAD puke. Yuck , this mellow-dramatic ballad crap is seriously making me nauseous. Excuse me while I go vomit. (AS)
(INIT, PO Box 3432, Manakato, MN 56002, www.initrecords.com)

BLOOD IN/BLOOD OUT – "No One Conquers…" CD

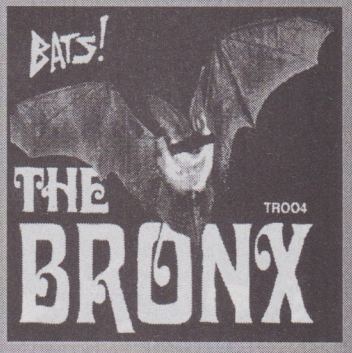
BLOOD IN/BLOOD OUT stomp through eleven tracks of macho hardcore that never seem to get any less ridiculous. If these guys work really hard and keep at it, maybe they can get one of these guitar-driven anthems of hate worked into a commercial for 24 Hour Fitness. (VH)
(Spook City, PO Box 43891, Philadelphia, PA 19101)

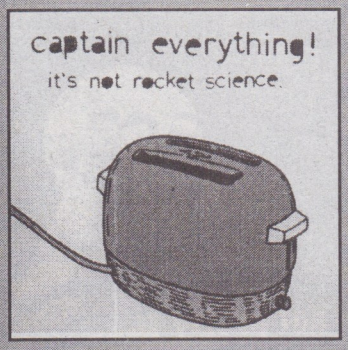
BOMBS OVER PROVIDENCE – "Liberty's Ugly Best Friend" CD

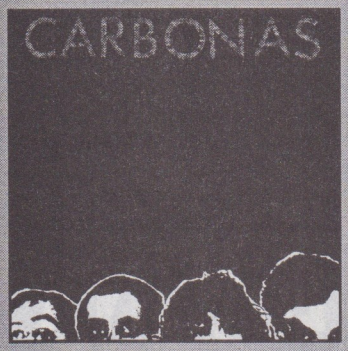
More strong Canadian emo pop punk that them folk tend to do so well. Six tracks of powerful anthemic stuff with chunky rhythms and guitars mixed in. I don't know if this band is connected to PAINTED THIN or any other G7 committee bands, but these guys got it down. You emo-core fans need this. A strong release. (RL)
(Underground Operations, PO Box 13, Ajax, ON, L1S 3C2, CANADA, www.bombsoverprovidence.com)

THE BREAK / LET IT BURN – split CD

One split, two bands—three tracks each. The BREAK kick things off with some hard-edged rock-influenced hardcore (or is that hardcore-influenced rock?) like a tough, nasty SENSEFIELD that would rather punch you in the head than read the Good Book with you. Nevertheless, they manage to massage the heartstrings at the same time as, like…rocking out, dude. This is slightly to the "punk" side of the "too rocky for me" fence, and as I write I'm quite "digging" it, as you kids say these days. LET IT BURN sound sort of similar to the BREAK though their singer has a kind of nasally whine akin to John Lydon which I'm not sure if I like yet or not. As before the rock is huge but not overpowering and things are kept punk enough so as not to induce Satanic hand-signing and headbanging, there's even a few backing whoas in there to keep in all street and shit. I'm still not sure if I like the singer's voice, it's kinda annoying, and so I pronounce the BREAK winners of the Doghouse Heavyweight bout by knockout in three rounds.
(Doghouse, PO Box 89446, Toledo, OH 43623)







BROKEN BOTTLES – "Not Pretty" CD

As I listen to this again, I realize it's grown on me. These guys sound like they're influenced by very early SOCIAL DISTORTION with a more nasally vocalist that has a sense of humor. The silly lyrics about cats, goth girls, and Orange County are a nice change of pace. (SR)
(Finger, 2931 W. Central Ave. Unit D, Santa Ana, CA 92704)

THE BRONX – "Bats" CDEP

A three-song CD on what I'm pretty sure is the label run by the folks from the EXPLOSION. And, hey, this band rocks hard. There's a strong old school rock & roll feel, reminding me of the DEAD BOYS. Also a street punk feel, more like the EXPLOSION or SWINGIN' UTTERS. Some of the attitude of MURDER CITY DEVILS. All this, done really well. No lyrics in here, so I don't know what the heck they're singing about, but really cool cover art with a big fucking badass bat. Would like to see this band live. (WR)
(Tarantulas, 411 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA 02144, www.tarantulasrecords.com)

CAPITAL DEATH – "Throw Reality Out the Window" EP

Uhhhhnn, take it out. It hurts. And it is so fuckin' good. Yah, when you don't use any lube and it scrapes, yet massages at the same time. This record fucked me hard. Ultra thrash, power scale guitar Greg Ginn solo craziness. Dudes sound like slammin' speedballs with Jen S'bitch. Crusty CIRCLE JERKS. (JA)
(Matthew Carroll, 12 Franklin Dr, Truro, Nova Scotia, B2N 5A9 CANADA)

CAPITAL SCUM – "Freak Show" 45

Hardcore with gruff n' tough vocals from Belgium. Their sound lacks any sort of variation, which makes this 7" kind of boring. They've got lyrics about alcohol, death, and drugs. (SR)
(Capital Scum, Hoogveld 22, 2580 Putte, BELGIUM, a416185@skynet.be)

CAPTAIN EVERYTHING! – "It's Not Rocket Science" CD

Upbeat melodic punk like what's so prevalent right about now. Call it Fat Wreck punk, Epitaph punk, mall punk, or whatever—I can't seem to get away from this stuff; it's on commercials on TV, all over the radio, what annoys me is that when I say to people in the real world that I like punk rock—they think I mean this stuff. Saying all that, it's not that bad…I just want it to stop. (AD)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE, ENGLAND)

THE CARBONAS – "I'm Astray" EP

I have to admit, I wasn't expecting much with this one. The pic sleeve is simple, if not boring, and they included a flyer that is equally as dull. Plus they appear to be from the south and the south hasn't exactly been a hotbed for great punk rock. On the positive side, the CARBONAS is a damn good name. This is sort of old school, mid-80s style, melodic, punk rock/hardcore in a ZERO BOYS or STRANGLEHOLD kind of way. It's not the most creative thing I've heard lately, but it is well played and is original enough that it held my interest. The B-side even has a RAMONES guitar riff that the band name suggests you might find. (KK)
($3 ppd: Die Slaughterhaus, PO Box 160168, Atlanta, GA 30316)

CHAINSAW / CONGA FURY / VOETSEK – "Westcoast Bullshit Disaster 2003" split 10"

Uh oh….Oh shit…What's this? Ferocious female-fronted thrash trash locals VOETSEK team up with two more rad thrash units from Japan. This is the special tour edition split 10". Awesome. Hope you guys got a chance to check out the shows when this little mini west coast tour came passing through. Several days of thrash madness tore us all a new one. And fuck we liked it a lot. Its funny that this split is called "The Westcoast Bullshit Disaster 2003." I know that these guys had some serious car trouble among a few other small disasters on this super short, like 5-day tour. Anyways, I'm rambling… This shit is worth picking up. I like all the bands on this 10". All play serious, super loud, super fast HC thrash assaults. How many times can I say "thrash" in one review? Three, just like the three awesome bands on this record. (LG)
(www.625Thrash.com)

CHEAP SEX – "Launch Off to War" LP

More soap, studs, and spikes from folks with a bunch of ABRASIVE WHEELS records. This reminds me of the less successful UK bands from back in the day, like the SPECIAL DUTIES (especially the vocals) and RIOT SQUAD: mid-paced, straight-forward, meat and potatoes punk rock. Its not bad at all, just a touch one-dimensional. And that name! What were they thinking? Decent anti-war/anti-state lyrics, though, which is definitely a plus. (TB)
(Punk Core, PO Box 916, Middle Island, NY 11953)

CLOROX GIRLS – "Baby" EP

A four song EP of high-energy, snotty, late-70s LA-sounding punk from these Oakland based upstarts. Think RED CROSS, URINALS, and maybe the GEARS. "Baby" reminds me a bit too much of TURBONEGRO'S "Get It On" or the RAMONES "I Just Wanna Have Something to Do." "Get It Away" is a cool-sounding rocker with a cheap-ass siren guitar break. "Trashy Daydream" is a good ol' fashioned punk anthem about one Jill Ruder and a certain habit of hers. Having said all of the above, I should love this record, but I don't—it lacks something I can't put my finger on, a sense of urgency perhaps—but don't let that deter you from getting this; like most Jonny Cat releases this is better than most. 400 pressed on clear vinyl with lyric sheet and photos. (RR)
($3 ppd: Jonny Cat, PO Box 82428, Portland, OR 97282)

COACCION – "Desorden" CD

16 fast and evil songs from this notorious tribe of Tijuana crustcore criminals. Tough, this shit is tough. Political lyrics and songs about depression and the demise of humanity. Driving fast guitars, cool sounding samples, gruff vocals, blazing drum rolls. Lyrics are in Spanish but the insert comes with English translations. Fast mosh threatening mayhem. Right on. (LG)
(Coaccion, c/o Manuel Verduzco, Calle ING. Fernando Sanchez A. #7906 Col. Zona Norte C.P. 22100 Tijuana, B.C. MEXICO)

CONTAINER CRUSTIES FROM HELL – "A Benefit for Food Not Bombs Phillipines" LP

Totally scathing metal crust from France. I heard some guys from France and Holland teamed up to form the CONTAINER CRUSTIES FROM HELL. They toured around parts of Asia and then put out this benefit LP for Food Not Bombs. Cool idea. The music is a fast blazing grind beats paired with metallic super-fast burning political crustcore. The first song had some interesting breakdowns that almost reminded me of some ANUBIS RISING. The album's got a lot of cool dynamics like strings, samples, and even some acoustic songs. Lyrics come with French and English translations. (LG)
(Maloka, BP 536-21014, Dijon Cedex, FRANCE)

CRIMES OF THE CONSPIRACY – "When You Get This Letter, Burn It" EP

CRIMES OF THE CONSPIRACY writes songs that are all over the place, going from fast melodic hardcore to slower parts reminiscent of YAPHET KOTTO or RITES OF SPRING. The band is definitely making an effort to do something original, which I commend them for, and they come up with some cool parts. However, I don't think they are really producing anything great. The art on the cover and insert art is pretty poor, with a lot of evidence of computer imaging. (WR)
(Pop Riot, PO Box 14985, Minneapolis, MN 55414)

CROWFISH – CD

The German answer to MILLENCOLIN, especially on the vocals. The problem is that I have never really cared for MILLENCOLIN. If you like MILLENCOLIN, as I know many people do, then you may very well enjoy CROWFISH. It is not bad, just not my thing. (JF)
(Freecore, www.freecore-records.com)

CRUCIAL UNIT – "These Colors Get the Runs" LP

Raise your glasses and pass out the lemon wedges—here's the first LP from these iced tea-heads from Pittsburgh. It's the R.A.M.B.O. school of East Coast hardcore gimmick-maniacs—dancing is required, fluids are optional, and no one gets away with a frown. From the fecal-riffic cover art, to "Dubyanomics," the title track, CRUCIAL UNIT takes on the Bush administration and the usual shit, but refuses to get all serious about it. I chuckled over "Crucial Unit's Friendship Picnic," in which they invite everybody—except the skins—to enjoy some french fries and bury the hatchet. Whatever happened to getting stabbed-in-the-back? Hardcore with a new theme for a new tomorrow—it may be only tea, but it sure beats kickboxing and shit. Fast, metally, choppy, and fun hardcore—go on, bounce off the walls. (AC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

CURSES - "Throw a Fit" EP

Debut four-song EP from this Seattle outfit. The CURSES are a raw, trashy garage punk outfit. They have a MISTREATERS/BASEBALL FURIES vibe, though not quite as noisy as either of those bands. This could be a Big Neck Records release. "Dirty Little Secret" is the real winner here, a mean-spirited pounding stomper. "Radio" comes in a close second. "I Hate the Radio Cuz I Love Rock 'n' Roll" gives you an idea what these guys are on about. Clear vinyl and lyric sheet. (RR)
(Home-Bilt Bomb! 5027 9th Ave NE Apt. Lower, Seattle, WA 98105)

CUT THE SHIT-"Harmed and Dangerous" LP

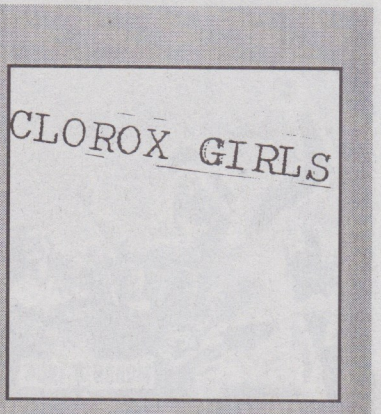
In a scene increasingly becoming swamped by mediocracy and just plain ol' blandness, along well come an act that pokes you right in your gammie eye with a big shitie stick, thanks CUT THE SHIT. Taking the East Coast sound that likes to fool around with rock riffs and youth crew chants, roughing it all up with a youthful dosage of high energy whilst paying homage to all the past Boston greats. Up there with TEAR IT UP for this kind of guitar thud. (SD)
(Gloom, PO Box 14253, Albany, NY 12212)

THE DANGER – "Confession Sessions" CD

Fluorescent pink five-piece combo, straight outta the snow-topped hinterlands of Wisconsin. *It Came from the Great Lakes*…on first listen I'm impressed by their busy hybrid of 70s punk and punchy pub rock of the EDDIE & THE HOT RODS variety. They don't aim to turn the world over, rather to rock some and hit the right notes when possible. Complicated, but never arrogant or asinine. The DANGER remind of Belgium's KIDS, which is to be taken as a *compliment.* Neat sort of wraparound sound from the DANGER. (JH)
(PO Box 192, Twin Lakes, WI 53181, roomzero@hotmail.com)

DARLINGTON – "Moron-A-Thon" CD

I thought these guys broke up!? Whatever. Same old bag of tricks, mid-tempo (for the most part), sugary sweet songs about girls and the usual pop punk stuff. They are as by-the-numbers and cookie cutter as you get. Stefan at Stardumb promised that this record would be better than their previous stuff, that lying motherfucker. I really don't like this band. That's all I gotta say. (BM)
(Stardumb, PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERDLANDS, www.stardumbrecords.com)



DEAD BY JULY – "Before Dishonor" CD

Mid-tempo punk with a street influence from Cleveland. Influenced by the CLASH by way of RANCID, they have a pretty slick sound and even throw in some minor chords to liven it up, complete with a big-sounding production. There's a lot of stuff like this coming out right now (not here in the Bay Area though), and you can tell the better stuff by its energy and conviction. Would DEAD BY JULY rather be in a dingy club than up on stage at the Warped Tour? That remains to be seen. (AD)
(Bockhorn, PO Box 10238, Beverly Hills, CA 90213)

DEAD HEROES – "I Hate This Life" EP

DEAD HEROES have a top-flight new EP out for you on Armen's legendary Headache Records. These Hillsborough, New Jersey punks and skins play solid punk rock in the NIBLICK HENBANE/WRETCHED ONES vein. The lyrics touch on the frustrations of youth trapped in the working class world of "have nots." One of the best lines is from "I Hate This Life": "I'm allergic to alcohol cause I break out in handcuffs." Good stuff! (BR)
(Headache, PO Box 204, Midland Park, NJ 07432, www.headacherecords.com)

DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY - "H-Town Angels" CD

Six tracks of fairly typical "Warped Tour" punk. Speedy, melodic, hardcore type stuff. Not so bad, though they do thank God. Mebbe that's what being the only tattooed skaters in West Virginia will do to you!? (RK)
(Infamous, www.defianceofauthorityrocks.com)

DEFIANT TRESPASS / COLD LIKE DECEMBER – split EP

DEFIANT TRESPASS plays pretty average punk rock with straightforward political lyrics. The songs are solid enough, but no one's treading any new ground here. COLD LIKE DECEMBER plays some more metal-influenced hardcore punk with quiet instrumental parts. Their lyrics are of a more personal nature. All of this topped-off with a nice looking screenprinted cover. (WR)
(Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St, Bethlehem, PA 18020)

DEFY FALSE AUTHORITY – "DFA" LP

It appears that DFA are pulling some MDC trickery with their name. On the last LP they were DFA (DESTINED FOR ASSIMILATION) and now they are going under (DEFY FALSE AUTHORITY). Who knows what other names they will come up with on future releases? Musically, this is ripping fast hardcore with a slight metallic edge. Pretty much all slow, no go. They do a LEFT FOR DEAD cover song, which actually kind of surprised me. I would expect them to do something a bit more old school, say in the vein of CORROSION OF CONFORMITY. (RC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931)

DELMONAS – "Do The…Uncle Willy" CD

A reissue of this mid-80s release. A UK all-gal group (at least vocally) that ran in the BILLY CHILDISH circles. In fact, also known as the HEADCOATEES at times. Also includes three bonus tracks not on the original. Great garage pop stuff from a classic UK combo. (RL)
(Get Hip)

DERITA SISTERS – "Punk Rock Nonstop—Live in Berlin" CD

A year can't go by without my getting a CD from the good ole DERITA SISTERS. It's like a rectal exam; you just have to suffer through it till next time. The DERITA SISTERS are a band that's been churning out generic frat boy "punk rock" for years and for some reason seem to be wildly popular in Germany, at least according to them. Go figure. This CD is from a live show in Germany and sounds like it came from a pocket tape recorder. I don't like the DERITA SISTERS CDs under normal circumstances, so it should be obvious that I don't like this crappily-recorded one. (DP)
(Kotumba, PO Box 40510, Santa Barbara, CA 93140)

DISCARGA – "Sem Remorso" 10"

DISCARGA, from Brazil, rip it hard on this 10". Song after song of blasting thrash mixed with touches of mid-tempo breaks, layered with catchy melodies. The higher-pitched vocals scream out lyrics about war, censorship, and capitalism. A great effort! (RC)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

DISCO INFERNO/EXISTENCH – split EP

DISCO INFERNO, hailing from Germany, offer up two dark-edged, wall-of-violent-sound scorchers that bear traces/influences of MORSER and SYSTRAL in the thickness of sound and intensity of the delivery, but come off with a more Scandanavian feel overall. Canada's EXISTENCH come right out of the gate crushing and punishing, destroying everything with a total audio annihilation style that reminds me I was really into their 7" from a number of years ago. They're still kicking ass and I highly recommend this 7" for both sides, but especially for the brutality of the EXISTENCH side. (WM)
(Blind Date,c/o Marcel Wieghaus, P.O.Box 700104, 79055 Frieberg, GERMANY)

DISKORDS / LOW ROLLERS – split EP

I missed the DISKORDS when they hit Berkeley and Sacramento earlier this month. I kinda regret it. From what I heard, they were amazing live, and everything I've heard by them so far has been fun and way better than anything I could have spewed out when I was their age. Their side of this split is no exception (although I do wish the recording was a little bit better). They are going to be one of those bands that everyone thinks are cute now, but when they finish high school everyone will be praising them as songwriters. At least I hope so. The LOW ROLLERS, on the other hand, were just too slow and bor-

ing for me to get into. Slow bar rock about cars and an ELVIS cover. Whatever dude, just gimmie the underage boys and everything will be OK... That last line sounded like something Shane would write. Freaky. (BM)
(Jonny Cat, PO Box 82428, Portland, OR 97282)

DISHONEST – "Climbing Up on the Way Down" EP

I'm not going off on yet another tangent about how great Scandinavian bands are these days, but here we are with another barnstormer. This band essentially plays ripping hardcore, but mixes in off-kilter guitars (not unlike countrymate ENDSTAND) with the socio-political lyrics and driving melodies of MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, then adds the speed of DS 13. Tough to pigeonhole, but an awesome record and a split release between five labels, which gets a big co-operative thumbs up from me. (TB)
(Enslaved, PO Box 169, Forster Court, Bradford, BD1 2UJ, ENGLAND)

DIVIDE BY ZERO – "Mirrors" CDEP

Chicago boys playing five songs worth of heartfelt TEXAS IS THE REASON (earlier, pre-LP era) style emo punk. Thumbs up—keep it coming. (AS)
(Sinister, PO Box 1178, LaGrange Park, IL, 60526, www.sinisterlabel.com)

DROP DEAD / UNHOLY GRAVE – split EP

DROP DEAD's side is five songs from their second LP re-recorded in 1998 in Sweden, live in the studio, and lost to the masses until now. Nothing new, just the same old intensity and vicious anger of DROP DEAD, much like the audio version of being kicked in the nuts. Awesome. UNHOLY GRAVE's side is a total wall of violent sound. Some of the more intense UNHOLY GRAVE I've heard lately. Guttural low voicals and shrieking high vocals over fast distortion-grind. Intense. Fans of either band will not be disappointed. (WM)
(MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizuro, Kyoto 624-0913, JAPAN, **http://www.dance.ne.jp/~mcr/**)

DRUGSTOP – "Drugs" EP

This band keeps reminding me of the NOBODYS, not that they sound just like them (they don't), but the thing they have in common is the music is fast and repetitive and catchy, but the lyrics are pretty empty and boring. I don't hate this record, because the music is good, but work on the words, boys. (DP)
(My Ruin aka Rosa, c/o Rosi, Johannistorwall 34a, 49074 Osnabruck, GERMANY, www.myruin.de, www.rosarecords.de)

DYKE HARD / LOCAL OAFS – "Mortal Combat" split EP

DYKE HARD exploits some excellent opportunities like "I just want to choke you with my cunt" and "Rob 'n' rape a truckdriver" with their spirited roit grrrlesque punk. The DYKES work the call and response tactic well over their raw, remedial music. It almost sounds like the OAFS borrowed the DYKE's singer for this split, but the sound quality is so bad, it's hard to tell. A predictable Pro Wrestling sound byte starts the OAFS off as they match the DYKES six raw tunes with six short, sweet, low-fi, gems of their own. Consistent high energy and poor sound quality make this a solid EP. (HM)
(Cage Match, c/o Sivervik Kvarnvägen 15A s-903 20 Umea, SWEDEN)

EFFIGY – "Grinding Metal Massacre" EP

Whoa, the intro to the song "From Hell" sounds just like a very early METALLICA song. Hell the whole song reeks of METALLICA. The thing that throws it is the guy's deep growling vocals. They make it sound a little rougher. The flip side of this EP is definitely straight-up crustcore. It is faster and probably more appealing to the readers of *MRR*. (Though they do sneak in a guitar solo) Bring out the Flying V guitars and bullet belts, it is time to start the crust war! (RC)
(Crust War)

EL CENTRO – "Prohibido" CD

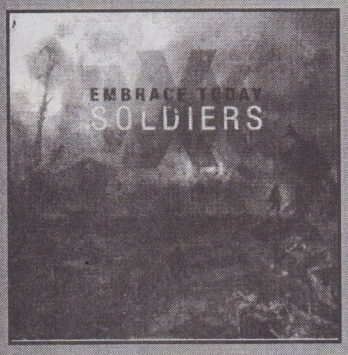
A good second full-length from these SoCal boys. Mostly guitar-driven melodic punk. Think 800 OCTANE with a touch of SOCIAL DISTORTION. Lots of "Ohhhs" in the mix too. They do mix in a punky reggae song here and there. Which whenever done just reminds me of SUBLIME (ugh!) and not the CLASH (yeah!) which is just my hang up. Still a recommended release. (RL)
(Fingers, www.fingerrecords)

EL ZOMBIE – "Going to the Bank" EP

My educated ear leads me to believe this is not a one-man band, but "Gawrsh Darn It," it should be. Nice stomping simplistic drums accentuating with some sliding guitar and some harmonica blowing along with a man singing the blues. Well, the modern day version of it—"I need a raise, I want some money, I'm going to the bank." The two songs on the side A, "Going to the Bank" and "Home Daddy," are super catchy. I am dancing around and Roy's chugging a bottle of moonshine. The B-side's "Hang 'm High" is slower and possibly a concept piece. Still fun though. (CK)
(dBs, PO Box 2550, 3500 GN Utrecht, NETHERLANDS, dbsrecords@dbstudio.nl)

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN / EL NADA – split CD

I hate split CDs and I'll tell you why. there is no sepperation between Church and State. You get a split 7", 10", 12" whatever, and you know side one is this band and side two is that other band. Simple. You keep things neat and perfect. No hassle. CD splits suck because nine times out of ten, the first band sucks and you gotta skip ahead a bazillion songs to get to the other band. What's worse is when you're a cranky reviewer who just spent three hours in trafic to get here and then has to sit here and flick through this Les Pauls, sideburns, and denim horseshit. No, no, no fuck you sir. Fuck you Steve Miller,



for continuing to drag a dead horse with ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN. Yeah, that band was good, 10,000 records ago! And EL NADA, here's what I gotta say to you, knock it off. Stop it. You guys sound like ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN back when they could still get it up. Alright, I'm done. Now get out of here before I tell your moms. (BM)
(Finger, 2931 W. Central Ave. Unit D, Santa Ana, CA 92704, **www.fingerrecords.com**)

EMBRACE TODAY – "Soldiers" CD

Metal-cored hardcore with a boisterous straight-edge attitude and with negative-positive lyrics ("Well I could cut my wrists with this razor, but fuck you" and "I'll struggle on / On and on. Run…/ Run away"). Uncompromising and relentless hardcore attack similar to CONVERGE. Fans of such styles would be pleased. (WM)
(Deathwish, 10 Lothrop St, Beverly, MA 01915, www.deathwishinc.com)

EMERGENCY / NUMBERS – split 12"

The second edition of a record I've thumbed past more than once—and never bought. San Francisco's NUMBERS you might be familiar with: more keyboards than some would like, too "new wave" for others, too 21st century wasteland for casual audiences or unwilling listeners. Me,I've always dug their switched-on brand of guitar and keys, their quirky compositions, and their willingness to play almost anywhere and with anyone. Two of their tracks are readily available on their excellent *Numbers Life* album from a year or whenever ago: "TV Life" and "Photographic Life" are simply top drawer noise. Portland's EMERGENCY, are a mixed-gender band that scrabble at their instruments like a teenage CONTORTIONS, shooting sparks and spouting out difficult sounds. Their kind of sounds aren't easy to acclimate one's self to, *but* they've piqued my curiosity. (JH)
(Archigramophone, www.archigramophone.com)

ENDROPHOBIA – "A Reason to Go On" EP

Killer, melodic punk from Germany is what we have here—featuring ex-members of LOST WORLD and RESIST. Quick-paced punk attack (that brings to mind Bremen heroes KORRUPT) with really great female vocals that have that sound of a throat damaged by too much whiskey and too many cigarettes. Great, great, great! (MT)
(No Options, 1221 28th St, Oakland, CA 94608)

FAILURE FACE – "Complete Failure" CD

I love FAILURE FACE—in the world of early to mid-90s punk rock they were a welcome oasis of pure, unadulterated rage in a sea of whiny crap. Forty blasts of full-bore brutal-as-fuck hardcore with a heavy NEGATIVE APPROACH influence, both lyrically and musically. Contained within this CD are all their EP tracks, the split with EBS, a comp track, and their complete set from their recent reunion show at *Burrito Fest 2003*. Bonus points for the lack of shrink-wrap—really, why do so many punks insist on creating more fucking garbage in this world? "Every day that I don't eat the gun—I won, I won!" Fucking great! (MT)
($6 ppd: Burrito, PO Box 3204, Brandon, FL 33509-3204, www.soundideadistribution.com)

FASTER DISASTER - "Exploding Head Phenomenon" CD

These Seattle scenesters serve up these mid-tempo, bluesy, rock grooves that have potential, but are too long and slow for my taste. I could barely make it through a second listen. (HM)
(Screaming Pancakes, 9594 First Ave. NE #175, Seattle, WA 98115-2012, www.fasterdisaster.com)

FAUX – CD

So what is with everybody deciding that they have to have the "goth" thing going on these days? Not that I mind, but the keyboard and distorted vocal thing is getting a little ridiculous. Still, the FAUX sounds closer to the LOST SOUNDS than say, the FAINT. In fact, with the whole male/female vocals, the FAUX sounds so much like the LOST SOUNDS it is scary. (JF)
(Tarantula, PO Box 411a, Highland Ave. #348, Somerville, MA 02114)

FEAR IS THE PATH TO THE DARKSIDE – "Only the Dead Have Seen the End of War" LP

Epic metallic German crust akin to MORSER, ACME, and their ilk—a definite departure from their EP of a few years back which had more speed and punch to it, in opposition to the overly drawn-out soundscape that is this record. It builds up and builds up but never lashes out—so the end result is this sorta brutal plodding along that doesn't really go anywhere. Brutal metal-core that I'm sure many will adore, but it's just too drawn out for me. (MT)
(Scorched Earth Policy, Irisstrasse 19, 67067 Ludwigshafen, GERMANY, www.scorchedearthpolicy.de)

FIFTH HOUR HERO – "Scattered Sentences" LP

No Idea is to the early 00s what Lookout! was to the early 90s ('cept over in Florida of course) in that they've managed to change the face of American punk by releasing records by largely local bands. FIFTH HOUR HERO (who are actually from Quebec and just *sound* like they're from Gainesville) follow up their split with GUNMOLL with a full album of mid-tempo emo/punk with female vocals. A cross between BITCHIN' and SMALL BROWN BIKE perhaps,would be the best descripiton. It's very tuneful, very LEATHERFACE, very JAWBREAKER. Very nice. (AD)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

FIYA – "Among Others" EP

FIYA is from Gainesville and you can tell. Playing passionate raw punk that reminds one of AGAINST ME! with out the folkish hippy parts, and RADON with all the feel-good parts. Now if you are like me, then those two names should make your ears perk up and your feet start dancing. That is, if they

aren't already headed to the maibox to order this record from... (JF)
(Dead Tank, 2351 Ernest St, Jacksonville, FL 32204)

FLEAS & LICE / RESTARTS – split CD

This disc combines the RESTARTS' *State Rape* with FLEAS & LICE's *Recipes for Catastrophies* LP. Both bands play fast paced snotty punk rock that whips right along through 20 tracks. A great soundtrack to an evening of getting blasted on cider and causing chaos—but with a purpose! (MT)
(Rejected, PO Box 6591, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, IRELAND, www.rejectedireland.cjb.net)

THE FONDAS – "Coming Now!" LP

.....a pop group with roots in 60s music.....there's a chick with big sunglasses and a hot body who does the vocal work....she sounds pretty good.....actually the whole band really isn't that bad.....lotsa covers though....but this shit sounds pretty fucking good.....and I'm not just saying that cuz I'm loaded right now either!!!!!!! .....I'm serious people, my prick is REALLY QUITE STIFF!!!!! This record should've been called *Coming Now....On Your Face*.....!!!!!!! (SW)
(Sympathy For The Record Industry, www.sympathyrecords.com)

FRANTIC FLATTOPS – "Hi- Fi Honey" CD

Great mellow rockabilly rockin' that makes you at least tap your foot if you're too embarrassed or think you're too "cool" to dance. This is an excellent album for fans of STRAY CATS, BIG SANDY, or even ELVIS that want to branch out a bit. Apparently it's a re-release with added bonus tracks. (SR)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317)

FRESNEL – "Scenario" CD

Four-song CD from this rather emo HC noise machine. Grungy chunky atmospheric hardcore with melodious emotional tones and depressing distortion. Slow breakdowns, screamy uncomfortable lyrics. This is serious "I feel like shit so I'm gonna play some crazy ass HC shit and feel good about my feeling bad-ness" kinda jams. Songs have names like "Pale Face" and "Fools Wanted, Apply," I don't know how this music really makes me feel—kinda uncomfortable and annoyed and depressed all at once. One of the songs has an almost four-minute atmospheric experimental intro. I think they could have cut some of that shit out of there. I was pretty pacified and I think I even started drooling by the time the pain-filled screams of agony and chunky noise guitar rhythms finally kicked in. Although this wasn't really my cup of tea, fans of this type of music should find it interesting. (LG)
(Fresnel, www.fresnel.at)

FUMBLES IN LIFE - "The Gift of Forever" CD

Solid youth crew straight edge from Italy. You know the drill: trophy t-shirts, x-Swatches, and cargo shorts. Nothing is really standing out, not even the YOUTH OF TODAY cover. Everything is coming off as little too generic I guess. Maybe it's the fact that they are on a label called Youth Crew Records? I know, things get lost in the translation, but why not just name the label Straight Edge Records? Or how about Hardcore Records? Usually I eat stuff like this up, but everything seems so damn boring after that screaming in that TIME X song (see my TIME X review). (CC)
(www.youthcrewrecords.com)

THE FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS – "Razor Blade Blues" EP

I saw these guys at the *Horizontal Action* Blackout in May and I am amazed that this is the same band. They were good then, but this record is really cool. Their influences pop right out at you—CRIME, ANGRY SAMOANS, MUMMIES—but who doesn't like those bands? The FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS blast out the tunes with such no holds barred power and the singer sounds like a big brat. This is punk, this is garage, this is whatever you want it to be. Who cares?!? Fantastic. (CK)
(Electrorock, PO Box 13504, Wauwatosa, WI 53213-0504, yourstupidface@hotmail.com)

THE FUSE! – "Breaker! Breaker! / Beggars and Choosers"

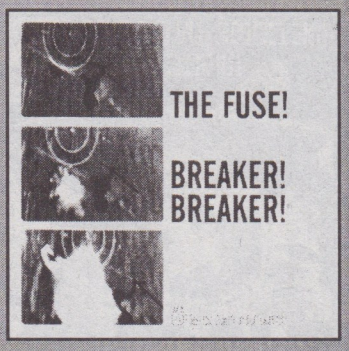
Nice. Two short bursts of punky garage pop. This sounds English, though I think they are from California. Everyone in the band seems to be doing a different musical style. The guitar sounds twangy. The bass pops along. The singer sounds like a relic from an English art punk band. Yet it all comes together perfectly into two super catchy songs. In other words, the FUSE! sounds like FALL's Mark E. Smith fronting the REZILLOS. Wow. (CK)
(In the Red)

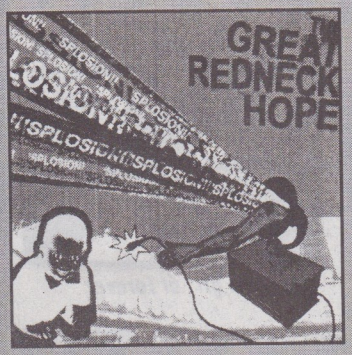
GAMBLING ACES - "No Regrets" CD

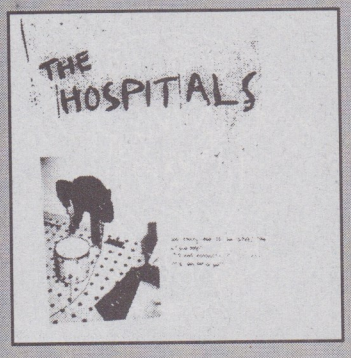
Seven tracks of pretty basic, straight-ahead punk. Kind of like the MISFITS without the tunes, or mid-period UK SUBS without the direction. Tough-guy/wife-beat/we-like-to-drink kind of stuff. Not terrible, just very blank and nondescript. Oh well. (RK)
(Smelvis, PO Box 1779, Wilmington, CA 90744, www.smelvisrecords.net)

GAMEFACE – "Four to Go" CD

Do we even still review Doghouse releases because of the whole ALL-AMERICAN REJECTS thing? I guess it's not really my department, so I'll shut the fuck up. Anyhoo, the music: the next band to misuse harmonized guitar leads gets their pro-gear confiscated and incinerated. Other than that, the only interesting things left to say about this band are as follows: 1) They sound fucking exactly like MATCHBOX 20, and 2) One of the members has the same haircut I had in the seventh grade when I let Old Navy dress me. Another mediocre band, another wrinkle in my fucking 18-year-old forehead. (MX)
(Doghouse, PO Box 8946, Toledo, OH 43623, www.doghouserecords.com)







GEORGE BITCH JR. – LP

Raging French power violence that owes many a debt in sound and style to SPAZZ, NO LESS, and AGENTS OF SATAN. This is damn good and well worth your time, if you're into power-violence styled hardcore. Comes with loads of inserts and a good-time goofy attitude. (WM)
(Chimères, 8 Rue de l'Église, 89500 Cornant, FRANCE, www.chimeresalacampagne.org)

GIRL TROUBLE – "The Illusion of Excitement" CD

It's nice to see GIRL TROUBLE is still around and making some nice noise. Surfy, rock-abilly tunes with high energy and a good bopping quality. Fun stuff. (CK)
(Wig Out, PO Box 44633, Tacoma, WA 94844)

GREAT REDNECK HOPE – "'Splosion!" CD

Yeah, Looking at this nine-song CD from the GREAT REDNECK HOPE I had already made up my mind it was going to be 100% pure shit. *Somehow* I ended up with some really intense RORSCHACH-influenced madness. Piercing guitars. Harsh vocals. Unrelentingly abrasive and chaotic...fucking great. The GREAT REDNECK HOPE? Go figure. (VH)
(Thinker Thought, 1002 Devonshire Rd, Washington, IL 61571)

GRITOS DE ALERTA / JESUS CRÖST – split EP

Brazilian punks GRITOS DE ALERTA return for a follow up to their great split with HERESIA and deliver the goods again with four tracks of brutal crust that borrows heavy from the DOOM school. I can see the dreadlock crusties swilling cider and whipping their ropey hair about in a chaotic dance of death until they pass out in a drunken stupor. Belgium's JESUS CRÖST ravage the flip-side, blasting their way through five tracks that makes me think of HERESY on an off night—decent enough, but something just isn't quite there. Great lyrics, though, critical of both the punk scene and the world outside of it. (MT)
(Terrötten, c/o Renan Favero, Caixa Postal 8080, Porte Alelgre – RS, 90201-970, BRAZIL, www.terrotten.com)

HAPPY CAMPERS – CD

Fun, poppy punk rock that sounds like it was raised on a mixture of BLINK 182, BAD RELIGION, and SCREECHING WEASEL. Yes, I mentioned the "B" word, and kids, I hate to tell you this, but it has now been half a decade since that band hit it big, and you are going to start hearing even more of their influences in today's bands. Now the thing I like about HAPPY CAMPERS is that I hear an influence, but not a copy. Basically, this is just good fun punk. Now if they were pissed, it would be even better. (JF)
(Monkeyass, c/o Happy Campers, PO Box 71385, Las Vegas, NV 89170)

KENEE HIGHLAND & HIS VATICAN SEX KITTENS – "Be More Flamboyant!" CD

I'm sorry but I can't take this band seriously. Sorry. Everyone in this band has a lot of long curly hair and looks like WEIRD AL. I'm sorry but it's true. There are fucking sitars on this record. C'mon people! Not just regualr sitars either, oh no, they got an "electric sitar" (what the fuck is that for? I'm supposed to believe that there is now electric sitar music!? That somewhere in India there are some badasses rocking out on sitars!? Playing "Stairway to Heaven" and headbanging!? No way man. No fucking way). So, in conclusion, this band sucks for having too much hair and sitars. I wonder if people like these guys even know they are dorks? I mean, do they think "wow, we really shook the pillars of Heaven tonight, didn't we boys!" Get a clue, hippies. (BM)
(Stanton Park, PO Box 600058, Newtonville, MA 02460, www.stantonpark.com)

BOB HOCKO & THE SWAMP RATS – "Disco Still Sucks!" CD

Doesn't it? I can't get over it. I'm not going to go into the chequered past of this 60s-era combo that hailed from Pittsburg, PA (just like the zombies in *Night of the Living Dead* and Mike Lavella). There's a 95-page booklet that accompanies the CD and it delves to levels of detail that I can't begin to convey, here...let's just say that it's another obscurity presented to a 21st century audience courtesy the auspices of Get Hip. CD starts off with a version of "Louie Louie" that owes more to the SONICS than the KINGSMEN: wild, man, wild. Originals like "Hey Freak" and "It's Not Easy" are vivid garage grind that speaks to its authentic 1966 vintage: primitive, juvenile, but lots of fun. You got the usual number of covers here ("Hey Joe", "Tobacco Road", "Psycho", etc.). If you're from Pittsburg you might want to check it out. If you're into 1960s obscurities you should give it a listen. The disco reference in the title is wildly inappropriate, however. (JH)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15233, www.gethip.com)

HOLIER THAN THOU? – "We Come in Peace, We Leave in Pieces" EP

Oh yeah.....Southern California circle pit action in effect. Skatecore? Thrashcore? Crossover? Hardcore? All of the above? Shit, fuck all the labels and just buy this record and rock it hard! (RC)
(Flowerviolence, Kapellenstrasse 16, 69469 Weinheim, GERMANY, www.flowerviolence.de)

HORMONAS - "Teenage Pussy" EP

"CRAMPS meet JACK O'FIRE meet PUSSY GALORE" is what they're aiming for, and that's indeed about what they've come up with. That spells success, so take a bow, boys! (DD)
(Shake Your Ass, Via G. Carducci, n.20, 20064 Gorgonzola (MI) ITALY, capinch66@fastwebnet.it)

HOSPITALS – CD

A two-piece garage punk band. Oh, OK. No, *not* OK. Fucked up, mean, distorted, aggro, and out of time. Stripped down for a reason, so as to avoid cliché. This avoidance leads to some noise for the sheer sake of noise, and we lose out on a song or two in order to appease certain personal demons of contrariness, but the strength of this record shines through. Basement punk that puts a heavy, twenty-stone emphasis on throttling life out of a dead proposition. Mostly, we gots a winner here. (RW)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

THE HUSBANDS – "Introducing the Sounds of the Husbands" LP

Awesomly enough, these three women sound tough as nails, singing about basements and dirty mouths. There's a lot of covers on this record, but who says that's totally lame? I'm so happy that there are more tough women out there who aren't blatantly ripping off the RUNAWAYS, if you know what I mean. I like how it doesn't sound like they spent lots of money on the recording—it gives it more character. (MM)
(Swami, PO Box 620428 San Diego, CA 92162)

HYPATIA – "We Move aqt Light Speed" EP

OK, I will try to give this band a chance. The do have some outbursts of speed anger and aggression, creating some good driving hardcore. And that is mixed in with some tolerable moments of straightforward punk that reminded me of AVAIL. The problem is there are a few moments of straight-up melodic crap that I really could not stand. Sung vocals, quiet musical interludes…no thanks. It should be noted that they have a song called "Dreadlocks and Birkenstocks." Excuse me while I go vomit in the toilet. (RC)
(Square Of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St, Bethlehem, PA 18020)

HYPATIA / ROBOT ATTACK – split EP

If you can get past the mind-numbing Midwestern indie rock guitar noodling, ROBOT ATTACK eventually make a choppy transition into fast, hectic posi-hardcore. Overflowing with energy and sweat, it's exactly what you'd expect from ex-RAIN ON THE PARADE. I love that the songs are so short, but,the cheezy sound effects and the… dynamics? Give me a break. The B-side of this split brings us HYPATIA, who share members with ROBOT ATTACK and seem more or less to be a tightened-up version of the same band. Their take on the youth crew sound is not only a lot easier to take seriously, but pretty damn good. Three high energy anthems packed with sing-alongs. (VH)
(Square of Opposition, 2935 Fairview St, Bethlehem, PA 18020, http://sofo.fakeindependent.com)

I SHOT CRYUS – "Tiranus" LP

Fuck yeah! Tons of amazing hardcore bands coming out of Brazil these days, and these guys are one of my favorites. Filled with so much speed and fury, Sao Paulo's I SHOT CRYUS deliver that distinctive 625 Thrash sound, ripping through 15 tracks of raging hardcore packed with manic energy. The raw intensity, urgency, and abrasive edge they pull from 80s Brazilian greats like COLERA and RATOS DE PORÃO (that the polished sound of bands like DISCARGA lack) is really what stands out for me. A great record. (VH)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413, www.625thrash.com)

INSPITE – "Only the Dead" EP

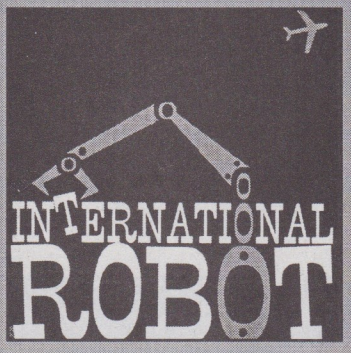
Damn! This little record is kicking my ass. Violent, angry, vicious, INSPITE. This here little 7" piece of vinyl is clear wax, 11 songs, one-sided, kick ass. The good recording/mix gives them plenty of punch—the bass sounds awesome. Well worth your time. (WM)
(Torture Garden, PO Box 1098, Bel Air, MD 21014)

INTERNATIONAL ROBOT – "Front Door" EP

INTERNATIONAL ROBOT plays garage punk with attitude and pop sensibilities. The first song starts out great—like the BUZZCOCKS meet the SAINTS or the Australian SCIENTISTS. Fuck yeah, I'm totally digging this...then the third and fourth songs start sounding a little too like moustache-rock for my taste, like "ooo-yeah-yeah!" …and I'm like ooo-no-no! Then, goddammit, they fuck up my review, as the last song kicks in with this driving guitar rhythm, and my head starts nodding up and down ! This shit is fucking good. You wanna know what I think? I think if this EP was a 45 with one good song on each side then the world would be abetter place. (AS)
(Pop Riot, PO Box 14985, Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.popriotrecords.com)

J CHURCH / STORM THE TOWER – split LP

This new stuff is really good! It's invigorated with a new cast of characters from Austin. Joining Lance are Ben from *Snakepit* zine, on bass, Chris from STORM THE TOWER, on drums, and some maniac named David on second guitar. The first track, "Terror or Love," is a weird one, with hints of an apocalyptic softness that recalls CRINGER's "Ballad of a Handgun"—compare "You and I should just watch this city burning down," to "We love to watch the city burn while we make escape hand in hand." "Wonderful" is a slow pop song that draws into a moody, bittersweet instrumental. "The Satanists Convene" is a eulogy to some of San Francisco's most idiosyncratic, dearest monuments, recently lost: the LaVey's Church of Satan, the Mechanical Museum, the Church of John Coltrane. Musically, there's something new with "Mature Shower Curtains"—gentle nods to free jazz under a slightly jarred, unsettled melody that almost reminds me of SONIC YOUTH. STORM THE TOWER is awesome live and here too, edgy and animated. The sound is a little melancholy, hanging somewhere on the RITES OF SPRING tree—or maybe more like UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON, sad but redemptive, with a high guitar working off-kilter to the rest of the band, but without distorting the songs. A winner of a split. (AC)
($9 ppd: Broken, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0406, www.brokenrekinds.com)



JUDGEMENT DISORDERLY – "Low Power" EP

All right, so go ahead and grab around 20 stereos. Grab all of your friends' copies of *Flex Your Head,* place the vinyls on the turntables at random grooves; random songs. Turn that shit on!!! Sounds like shit, huh? Alright now, turn the RED C, MINOR THREAT, and VOID up to 8 and turn the rest down to 4. Sounds great now. This is that sound. How? I don't fucking know. (JA)
(Daisuke Okabayashi, 1-5-3 kamimachi Kochi City, 780, JAPAN)

KARLOFF – "Monster's Ruin" CD

God this is awful. Fuck any band with those stupid psychobilly haircuts. Anyone with hair that dumb is no friend of mine. This stuff is so cliché it's not funny. This is by far one of the most pathetic sub-genres of punk rock. (BM)
(Fat Hippy, 91 Beachview Ct, Aberdeen, SCOTLAND AB24 1WB)

KEVIN K & THE REAL KOOL KATS / NEUROTIC SWINGERS – split 7"

KEVIN K and his boys dish out two sugar-sweet rock & roll pop morsels, the first an amazing original and the second a "better-than-the-original" cover of "Leaving on a Jet Plane." Apparently Kevin is an old timer who shared the stage with the RAMONES, JOHNNY THUNDERS, and the DEAD BOYS. I guess it's true what they say about the kind of company you keep. I can't wait to hear the album. The NEUROTIC SWINGERS serve up two spastic fun filled punk 'n' roll tunes with the greatest of ease. You can tell this stuff comes naturally to them. They actually remind me of a more-punk HIVES, especially in the vocal department. Good stuff. I highly recomend this record. (BM)
(Lollipop, 7 Impasses Monsegur, 13016 Marseille, FRANCE, **lollipop.records@wanadoo.fr**, **www.chez.com/lollipoprecords**)

KÄRNVAPEN ATTACK – "Postnuclear Hardcore" EP

This is really great. Anthemic and catchy without being a bit wimpy, KÄRNVAPEN ATTACK lays down nine tracks of driving hardcore punk that makes me wanna pogo around my room until I fucking puke. Fans of Spanish heroes E-150 would be doing themselves a favor and checking these chaps out. (MT)
(Mala Raza, Ap. 6037, 50080 Zargoza, SPAIN, www.malaraza.com)

KAVOLCHY – "One in Five" EP

If nothing else, I get to stare at the pic sleeve while I listen to the three songs on the EP. Like most heterosexual men, I am a sucker for a hot chick and this band has gone and loaded up with three (plus your token male drummer). This fucker better be taking care of business while he's got the opportunity. Still, I'm betting that the product is pretty damn good; hot chicks have a way of making good music. There's something about being hot that makes them angry. Still, it's always safe to actually listen to a record that you're supposed to be reviewing. This is mid-tempo punk rock that is catchy in none of the wrong ways and fueled by hot female angst. This is not pop punk or punk pop. This is punk rock. Sure, the vocals are there. But so are the drums and the guitar and the bass. Any band that can be melodic and maintain a sense of urgency at the same time is okay in my book. This is a record worth looking for and at. (KK)
(Squirrel, PO Box 481, Leeds, LS5 3TH, UK, squirrelrecords@hotmail.com)

KIROUS / SILNA WOLA – "No End in Sight for Global Tragedy Hours..." split EP

KIROUS hails from Finland and lays down four tracks of heavy, blasting, metallic crust—though the production is a bit too flat for it to be effective. Decent enough, but their other records are better, me thinks. Poland's SILNA WOLA (who split up in 1998) contribute three tracks of DOOM-style crust—thick and driving with guttural vocals. Decent. (MT)
(Retard, c/o Altemark, Storgatan 22 D, 753 31 Uppsala, SWEDEN, www.retardrecords.com)

THE LAST CHANCE – "Last Chance" CD

Straight edge from England—Sheffield, to be precise. It's fast and punk rock enough where lots of this is not. Actually, although this not really my cup of tea, this isn't bad and I could listen to this. That's pretty high praise coming from me—I was all set to make a joke about being straight edge through a Yorkshire winter being a recipe for suicide, but now I won't. It reminds me of AMENDMENT 13 and AMULET. Pretty raging stuff, I wonder if John Peel still plays this kind of stuff... (AD)
(Dead and Gone, 42 Glover Road, Totley, Sheffield, S17 4HN, ENGLAND)

THE LAST SHOW – "Sleep" CDEP

Deathly simple, no-frills rock 'n' roll seems to be the weapon of choice here, and I think I like it quite a bit. The title track almost reminds me of a snail's pace WIPERS song, which is, if you can believe it, a good thing. I love that there's almost an equal amount of lo-fi dirt and poppy, hook-laden cheer. It's a difficult line to walk, and this band does so deftly. I look forward to good things. (MX)
(Solidman Inc, 516 West 25th St. Suite 500, New York City, NY 10001)

LIGHTYEAR – "Chris Gentlemens Hairdresser and Railway Book Shop" CD

Can a CD be whimsical and pretentious at the same time? Well, if you take one look at the title of this CD from England's LIGHTYEAR, you would say that the answer is yes. The liner notes are even worse. They have so much nonsensical writing that it borders on the ridiculous. On the sound wave spectrum, this is some good, fast-paced English pop punk with horns. A winner, even if it is a little much. (JF)
(Household Name, PO Box 12286, London, SW9 6FE ENGLAND)

LOCAL OAFS / MUSIC NINJA – "Essen Sie Punk?" split EP

The LOCAL OAFS are insanity in the style of VILENTLY ILL or MR. CALIFORNIA, but with a whole band and not just one crazy guy. MUSIC NINJA have a slower tempo lo-fi bluesy garage sound and are the Valium for the LOCAL OAFS' seizures. (DP)
(Stranded Sjobuse, www.vanishingvanity.cjb.net)

LOST SOUNDS / THE VANISHING – split EP

Here's some quality goth/death rock. LOST SOUNDS lose me with their esoteric lyrics, but send me groovin' with their mesmerizing and meandering keyboard-driven journeys. The VANISHING explore dark depths with their own synthesizer gloom. A solid goth orgy. Both bands deliver excellent live shows and are currently touring, so check 'em out! (HM)
(Cochon, 315 Hyde St #304, San Francisco, CA 94109, www.cochonrecords.com, www.thevanishing.com)

MDC – "Millions of Dead Children" EP

This is a reissue of MDC's second single from 1984, after their relocation to San Francisco, the punk rock city. This here is a thorough job, complete with the entire fold-out collage art, packed, MDC style, with info about famine in Africa and across the world. Remember when punks—and purportedly, even people like Cyndi Lauper!—used to care about that sort of thing? These early singles put a notch in the post of early American political punk, aesthetically and in tone, calling out corporations by name and taking on crises of global proportion in the context of punk. "Chicken Squawk," on the A-side, has their slow, ironic Texas sound going on, as Dave and the gang borrow Foghorn Leghorn to take down the fast food chicken industry; the B-side has two faster numbers. This is a nice opportunity to get a hold of these songs and a slice of U.S. peace-punk history. (AC)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1A, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY)

MDC – "Multi-Death Corporations" EP

Released on the Crass label in 1983, this marked the first link between the British and American anarcho-political punk scenes and to many of us, showed how far ahead the Americans had taken the sound. More upbeat both in sound and personality compared to the deadpan Brits, this really broke the mold and introduced a lot of people in Europe to what was going on in the United States and expanded the wake left behind over there by the DEAD KENNEDYS. The EP contained four tracks, all fast, all hard, all to-the-point, and instantly made MDC one of my favorite bands, which they remain to this day. I found that their mixture of powerful punk, politics, artwork, wit, and sheer deviancy set them apart from their peers and set the bar for other bands to follow. The record itself had one of the best covers I've seen—the corporate logo inscribed skull/tank plowing over a pile of dead bodies. It folds out to reveal a mass of written information on the truly disgusting things going on in Central America sponsored by the US government in the name of furthering corporate interests. I've never been the same since I read that and looking at it today it still makes me sick. The best thing about this record, though, is not the great music, art, or message…but it's how they get every line in the title track to rhyme with "corporation." Now that's poetry. (AD)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1A, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY)

MAJORITY RULE – "Emergency Numbers" LP

OK, first off you gotta know that I really have no knowledge of metal. I grew up after NIRVANA had wiped most of the glam shit of the radio, and my experiences with metal are probably limited to listening to METALLICA every once in a while and hearing IRON MAIDEN at a friend's house. None of this matters a bit when I put on a MAJORITY RULE record. A band with a strong metal influence, they transcend categories and just come across as a band that simply rocks hard. They mix really nice instrumental parts into their three or four minute songs. Plenty of dynamics and screechy ghoul vocals, which get to me a little. The band is also a perfect example of the benefits of a great drummer. A really nice looking record, here, with simple enough black and white photos. A great live band, to boot. (WR)
(Magic Bullet, www.magicbulletrecords.com)

MAN – "Machine" CD

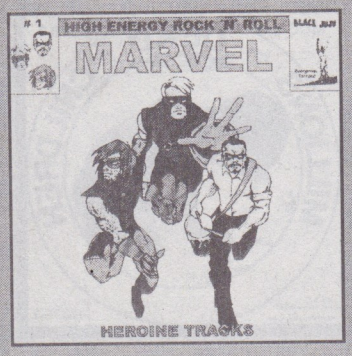
What you got here is one pissed-off individual with a drum kit and a bass guitar and a whole suitcase full of dead soldiers sitting next to him. He wants to go it alone ("Fuck the Team"), and he sees no reason to get a job ("Fired") or to join society and participate in its lies ("Schtick"). The effect is like a stripped down ROLLINS BAND demo without any guitar wanking. This is, honestly, an attempt by one guy to be totally straight in his communication with the outside world. It smells of frustration, anger, and isolation. You can argue about the music being "punk" or not, but he's got the "punk" attitude down in spades. (RW)
(Times Beach, 118 E. Seventh St, Royal Oak, MI 48067)

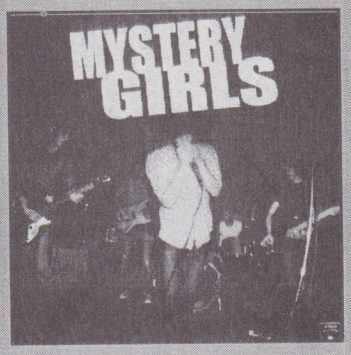
MARA'AKATE – CD EP

Heavy screamo math rock, that's not stuck being so smart that it's afraid to get a little rough. The sounds of U.O.A., ICONOCLAST, and DISMEMBERMENT PLAN all come to mind. Six songs is good songs. Recommendations I do give. (AS)
(One Day Savior, PO Box 372, Williston Park, NY11596, www.onedasavior.com)

MARILYN'S VITAMINS- "Vans Don't Run on Love" CD

If RANCID were acidic, and DILLINGER FOUR were basic, and were mixed in a beaker, somehow didn't explode, and were poured on a micraphone, you'd get the sounds of MARILYN'S VITAMINS. They even cover OP IVY. I know there's lots of bands out there with this same effect, but come on guys, they're Canadian. (MM)
(Underground Operations, PO Box #13 Ajax, Ontario L1S 3C2 CANADA)





MARVEL – "Heroine Tracks" EP

Well as the letter said, here's a rock and roll record for review, and rock and roll it certainly is. Four helpings of 70s-inspired riffage from these comic nerds, sounding not unlike TED NUGENT, URGE OVERKILL, BIG STAR, and a little slice of UNION CARBIDE PRODUCTIONS. If you, like me, have a healthy love for those wonderous cocained days of flared cords, Trans ams and Daisy Dukes, then you like me will dig this record. (SD)
(Black Juju, come.to/blackjuju)

MARTYRDÖD – LP

Pummeling stuff here—huge production for this Swedish wrecking ball that plows through ten tracks of heavy duty hardcore that fans of SKITSYSYEM, WOLFBRIGADE, ACURSED, and VICTIMS would be doing themselves a favor to look into. Big TRAGEDY influence is evident too—especially with sweeping melodic lines, which compliment the driving drum attack quite well. Burly and reccomended. (MT)
(Jens Bäckelin, Ormingeringen 70 3tr, 132 33 Salrsjö-Boo, SWEDEN, martyrdod@hotbrew.com)

MASSAKRO - CD

Devastating metallic-crust hardcore from Tijuana, Mexico. Huge, metal-tinged, crust-inspired riffs set to propulsive drumming, and gruff vocals in Spanish—a crushing combination. Top it off with huge production and you walk away with one hell of a good release. Not sure if this band has been around very long; either way, they need to get in a van and leave a trail of burning cities in their wake, and soon. This is where legends start. (WM)
(Tercermundistas, Apdo Postal #2489, C.P. 22000, Tijuana, B.C.N., MEXICO, tercermundistas@yahooo.com)

MISHAP – "Mark Your Territory" CD

What the fuck! I see how many Bay Area shows? And instead of getting something good to review, like BORN/DEAD, I get a shitty band like MISHAP. Playing a style that sounds like SIMPLE PLAN crossed with JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP, MISHAP has made it onto the list of bands I need to avoid. Maybe it is the fact that once again a band thanks "God" on their thanks list. Still, if you want to thank your invisible friend, so be it. Then there is the song "September 12," a fucking patriotic bullshit song about how it is time to throw down in the name of the USA. Fuck your patriotism and fuck your religion. Neither has a place in this place I call a scene. (JF)
(no address)

MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE / INVERTED – split EP

Aaahh…more Mr. CALIFORNIA. Good to know there are still a few real weirdo punks out there. The Mr. CALI sideis a tour document of sorts. 11 loony, funny and scathing songs in 93 seconds! All recorded live on WMBR Boston (Late Risers Club with DJ Ross) in March of this year. I had the good fortune to be in the studio and witness Mr. Cali write 10 of these gems (all new songs, excepting "Sexual Robot" which clocks in at a whopping 25 seconds) and whip the State Police into shape in under a half hour's time. "Free Jazz…It's Better than Paying for it" is just one highlight. INVERTED is a one-man thrash attack from Illinois who must be heard (or seen) to be believed. "Bloods Point" is a powerful furious metal blast that brings Cleveland's BOULDER to mind. "E.I.B." a BL'AST cover, rounds out the INVERTED side. We need more splits like this one. Two very different styles—no play-by-the-numbers punk here. 100 copies. (RR)
(PPZ, PO Box 410325, San Francisco, CA 9410325-0325, USA)

MURDER WEAPON – "Nervous Wreck" CD

This is the debut seven-song CD from Richmond, VA's own MURDER WEAPON. They have that fiery East Coast hardcore thing down pat. Strained tough-guy style vocals and fast-driving guitars mixed in with an abundance of breakdowns. I found the faster stuff to be pretty energetic, but overall this really wasn't anything special. (RC)
(Martyr, PO Box 955, Harriman, NY 10926-0955, www.martyrrecords.com)

MUZZARELAS – "Lotus Rock A.D." CD

Snotty, stupid and sleazy. That's what these Brazilian kids are all about. Not my thing really. They kinda remind me of any other band that thinks the *Faces of Death* videos are cool. I'm just not feeling it. (BM)
(13, Caixa Postal 13 – CEP 12010-970, Taubate, SP, BRASIL, **www.13records.cjb.net**)

MYSTERY GIRLS – "Circles in the Sand / That's What I Said"

"Circles in the Sand" isn't the late 80s Belinda Carlyle AM radio staple (*darn*), rather it's a kind of husky flange-driven bit of horseplay that sounds awfully familiar. Still pleases, though. "That's What I Said" is an uptempo number that ought to have occupied the 'A' slot. Kinda brief, but it's heartening to see the MYSTERY GIRLS earn a glossy color sleeve at this early stage in their careers. (JH)
(In the Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

EL NADA – "Nothing for Nobody" CD

Good time LA Cholo skate punk. Blown speakers in the Bario! Wa-hoo. There's a definite macho sort of dude slant to it, with songs like "G-Spot," and "Fuck." If that doesn't bug you, then you've got yourself SUICIDAL TENDENCIES with a sense of humor—can't go wrong with that. (AS).
(Finger, Orange County, CA, www.fingerrecords.com)

NAILBITER – "Abused" LP

NAILBITER brings just the right mix of heavy hardcore with a slight metallic edge. The band members have names like Godzilla, Kamikaze, and Hiroshima, and song names like "Blade." Heavy anthemic rhythms, guttural puking (it really is wretched) vocals, fast heart palpitating drum rhythms, and flesh-searing guitar solos. Definite Japanese HC influences are apparent. This shit is fucking badass. (LG)
(Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 26742, Richmond, VA 23261)

NEINS – CD

Nein, nein, nein. I'm pretty fond of these mystery men already (or their music, I oughtta clarify). It's fast, clear as a bell, and posessed of a evil charm that pushes 'em from memorable to near godlike (how often has that happened?) The NEINS are a Portland four-piece that punch fast and tough with a busy, hectic, and mechanical kind of appeal. Like a robot behind the wheel of a dodgem car. I hate referencing other bands in record reviews *but* this time I'll say that the NEINS remind me of all the things that I used to love about this old LA band called the PAPER TULIPS (crappy name) or the even older LA band the EYES (y'know, "Kill Your Parents" and take a quaalude now). Maybe it's the keyboards. The band has this wiseguy smart-aleck quality that wins me over...the music's fast and punchy, with lots of twists and turns and memorable hooks. I understand there's a POISON IDEA connection through the bass player, which qualifies them for a lifetime supply of punk points. (JH)
(www.theneins.com, theneins2002@yahoo.com)

JERRY J. NIXON – "Gentlemen of Rock 'n' Roll: The Q Recordings '58-'64" CD

A nice collection of rockin' rockabilly tunes from someone who was unknown to me until a few minutes ago. At the age of seventeen JERRY J. NIXON tried unsuccessfully to rob a bank in England. A few years later he arrived in New York claiming he lost his papers and became a US citizen. After relocating to New Mexico he decided to try his luck at singing. He did a pretty good job too. Catchy tunes backed by his band the VOLCANOES that sound very good as the sun sets over the *MRR* headquarters. I am very happy to have finally been introduced to JERRY J. NIXON. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm, Jurastrasse 15, 3013 Bern, SWITZERLAND, info@voodoorhythm.com)

NOGOODNIX- "Skeptic Tank" CD

There's been a lot of great bands coming out of Chico lately, like the P.A.W.N.S, GRUK, and this band, NOGOODNIX. Surprisingly enough, they all sound similar, which is totally understandable cause they're probably all friends and go to each other's shows, and all get colds together cause they share each other's beer. It's kinda cute if you think about it. (MM)
(Manifest Destiny, 142 W. 19th St, Chico, CA 95928)

NO THINK – "Straight to Hell" EP

Here are six new songs from Japan's own NO THINK. They blow through these insanely fast songs with the brute force of a sledgehammer. The thing is, musically it sounds like they have moved away from the thrash to more of a grindcore sound. The thicker prodcution and crustier vocals are part of the reason it sounds this way. In no way do I think this is a bad thing, it is just important to point out. So do youself a favor and check out these eye-watering tunes. (RC)
(HG Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi-M, 2-7-15, Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo 164-0013 JAPAN, www.interq.or.jp/japan/hgfact)

NO TIME LEFT – "Indentured Servant" 10"

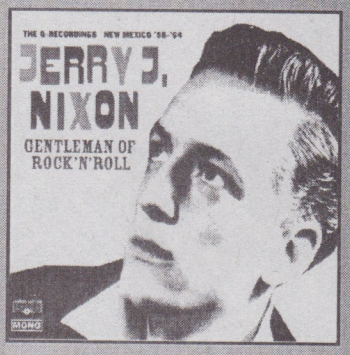
Let me start off by saying that I think that the NO TIME LEFT 7" was the most underrated record to come out that year. Every song was catchy and had something worthwhile to say. Still, I think this band never really got the respect they deserved. This especially didn't get the respect in the straight edge scene considering the heavy youth crew influence. Hopefully this 10" will change all that. Pretty much picking up where they left off, these five guys from Buffalo, New York churn out ten LIFES HALT-influenced tracks that rock from start to finish. Some of the youth crew influence has been traded in for some IRON MAIDEN and MOTORHEAD riffs. So when I say LIFES HALT, I am referring more to their split with WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, and less to their 7" on Youngblood. Another classic 10" released by 625. (CC)
(625, PO Box 423413, San Francisco, CA 94142-3413)

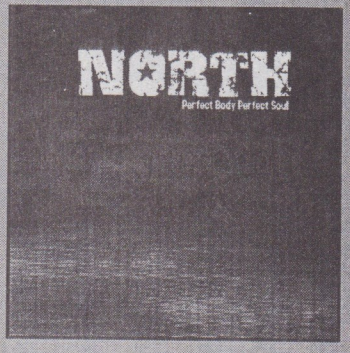
NORTH – "Perfect Body Perfect Soul" EP

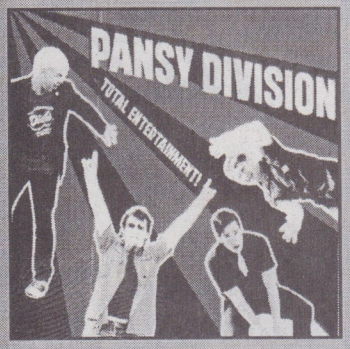
Good, youth crew-style hardcore with more melody than the average gang of thick-necks from this Dutch band (dammit, I swore to myself I would stop using sentence fragments!) The lyrics and press release also betray a genuine interest in eastern philosophy and religion. I've never heard SHELTER, but I guess this is always how I pictured them. I don't really want to get into a discussion regarding whether or not religion has a place in punk rock; I'd rather just say that at least they're singing about something positive instead of just whining about how much the scene sucks. (MX)
(Commitment, 1393 RL Nigtevecht, NETHERLANDS, commitment@poisonfree.com)

THE NOW DENIAL – "Truth on Fire" LP

Crust-influenced, burly German hardcore set to a driving beat. Thick guitar and bass recording and those precision German rhythms make this like a steamroller with a hell-bent-on-destruction driver at the wheel, barreling down the highway. If you think TRAGEDY would sound better with the singer from SOCIAL INFESTATION, then this is for you. (WM)
(Flowerviolence, Kappellenstr. 16, 69469 Weinham, GERMANY, www.flowerviolence.de)







OBLIVIANS – "Live Atlanta 8.1994" LP

OK, the OBLIVIANS are a known quantity for 90% of you garage punker types out there, so the question is: does this reissue of their mid-90s live bootleg merit your ducats? Why yes it does, for these reasons: the sound is terrific, the performance is frenzied to the point of incoherence, they do all their best songs, and, *and*, you don't hafta cough up $40+ on the internet to access it anymore. Real democracy going on here. (RW)
(Sympathy for the Record Industry)

OIL – "Electric Tongue" 10"

Christ, what the fuck happened to this band? Really? Started out as a youth crew band, then went full bore into SWIZ/FURY territory with their rather amazing first 12" EP (which Coalition re-ished later). But this is just is just fucking terrible, completely void of energy or any hint of passion—instead it reeks of boring hipster crap that appeals to college kids who are so "over all the punk crap." Fuck man, what happened? They were fucking killer when I saw them in Amsterdam like four years ago, it just makes me wonder how this happens. Even the DEADSTOOLPIGEON cover doesn't save it and in fact may only makes things worse—I'm still deciding. Come on dudes, do some fucking speed, listen to GENOCIDE EXPRESS, and get back to work. It hurts me to see friends of mine go down this path. (MT)
(Coalition, Newton Str. 212, 2562 KW Den Haag, NETHERLANDS, www.coalition-records.com)

OMEGA CINCO / NEBUR – "Boa Constrictor" split 10"

OMEGA CINCO "plays" art-damage from Spain, but it's missing either the damage or the art; I can't tell. Very frequently, there is no rock here at all, so if you require that sort of thing, even a little, I'd skip it. The weirdness is as polished as the Dim Mak catalogue, very slick, if you know what I mean, but with close to zero rock 'n' roll; I'm not into it. NEBUR is more of the same, with differences that do not interest me. To be honest, I'm not convinced this is a different band. Vocals like a male CAT POWER; cuts of just coughing and keyboards. There's some reference on the lyric sheet to SIOUXSIE, but I'm not hearing it, or as I said, anything at all with a pulse. This is somebody's thing, certainly. Or, probably. Possibly. Over and out. (AC)
(The Holy Cobra Society, PO Box 4095, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN)

ONE CAR PILE-UP – "Worst Episode Ever" CD

On Crackle, we have a good full length from one of their newer bands. From the UK, these guys do the melodic punk thing with a little emo and a little hardcore influence. Think a british PROPAGANDHI, musically. Although no one has the bite quite like PROPAGANDHI, this is a strong speedy release. Also, as bonus tracks, they have eight re-recordings of songs from prior releases. (RL)
(Crackle, PO Box 7, Otley, LS21, 1YB, ENGLAND, www.onecarpileup.com)

OUTBREAK – "Information Overload" CD

Clean cut kids from Sweden let out their teenage angst via uplifting melodies and chugga chugga guitars… Absolutely nauseating. (VH)
(Rockstar, Verbindungsstrasse 9, 52080 Aachen, GERMANY)

PACK – "Abyss of Desperation" EP

PACK plays a super-distorted blend of scathing crustcore madness. It's totally fast and powerful. There are blazing guitars, screamy tortuous screams, and whirlwind guitars. Oooh, and don't forget the best, a shitload of EEEEEER badass pick slides that will send you into a burning pit of demonic desolation. Better hope you got enough fucking studs on your jacket to weigh you down, because this shit is about to blow you away. I think this 7" was my pick of the month. It even has a cool gold silk-screened cover. The song names have titles like "Abyss of Desperation" and "Skinned Alive." I only wish there were more than three songs. Shit yeah, this EP rules. (LG)
(Rinderherz, Postfach 3634, 5001 Aarau, SWITZERLAND, Rinerherz@GMX.net)

PANSY DIVISON – "Total Entertainment" CD

So, PANSY DIVISION's days with Lookout are over, but they are truckin' on, playing mostly local shows and pride festivals in other towns. This album has 15 new songs of their brand of ultra-explicit queer pop songs, what they have been doing forever. If you are a fan of the band already, you will love this album. If you have never heard them, this would be a good chance to check them out. I'm glad PANSY DIVISION is still around, and although this album may not be as urgent as their first few, it is strong nonetheless. (WR)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, **www.alternativetentacles.com**)

PATARENI – "Nezadovoljstvo Je Energija" CD

CD number four in their ten (!!!) part CD discography. Ten. Fuck. PATARENI were playing brutal cookie monster vocaled hardcore grind in Yugoslavia years before your parents even thought about touching each other's naughty bits. This CD contains 61 songs—most of them live. 61. It's a bit much for me, but you grind freaks will probably think this is the best thing since sliced bread. (MT)
(Vegetarian Hardcore, patareni@hgu.hr)

PATARENI – "Tko Ne Pamti Iznova Prozivliava" CD

Unreleased material lets loose the lighthearted goofy side of European grindcore forefathers PATARENI. This is as interesting, and as good as it's going to get. (VH)
(no address)

PHALANX – LP

I have had the fortunate experience of getting to see these guys play several times. They are fucking awesome live and I fully had faith that their full length was going to rule just as much. I was totally right. This is a greatly executed crust record. Straight outta Portland, this is one scathing attack on the gloomy, apocalyptic, nightmare war-torn world we humans are dwelling in. This record puts my politics into perspective in a hauntingly rocking way. Comes with poster too. Ahh...now you really need it. The first song starts out with an amazingly moving powerhouse of a song called "To Tame a Land." Beautiful and dark melodic keyboards move me into utter disparity and I shudder with pain as sounds of pouring rain drive me for 20 seconds, before a full-on missile attack of crust mayhem comes bombarding me from somewhere in hell. (LG)
(No Options, 1221 28th St, Oakland. CA 94608)

PITBOSS – "Old School Hardcore" CD

Not the dreadfull beatdown hardcore band PITBOSS 2000, but another bunch of pit bosses (they actually look like pit bosses too)…and funnily enough, they're no less dreadful. More metallic oi than hardcore, that just kind of plods along with the drums deafeningly high in the mix and a singer who kinda sings in and out of time with the rest of the band. I struggled through to the end of the six songs only to be greeted with a faux Irish madolin number…jesus. (TB)
(www.pitbosshardcore.com)

THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER – "Dissertation, Honey" LP

Please ignore the horrendous, "we're-going-to-have-a-*revolutionary*-dance-party" title, because TPTBUTET definitely have something going on here. A jazzy sensibility and spastic saxophone mix relatively seemlessly with BLOOD BROTHERS guitars and RED LIGHT STING dance beats to create the first band I have heard in my year and a half of reviewing that could truly be described as wholly original. Now, a fat lot of good originality is going to do you if you don't have the energy to back it up. Fortunately, these comrades have it in spades. From all accounts, this band is incredible live, and little bits of slam poetry provide the chaotic set of songs with a nice set of bookends. It's good to see people reaching outside of punk-with-a-capital-P for their inspiration. I have been rocked. (MX)
(Happy Couples Never Last, PO Box 36997, Indianapolis, IN 46236, www.hcnl.com)

PREACHER'S KIDS – "Wild Emotions" CD

A lucky 13 tracks from this band of high-functioning alcoholics. The PREACHER'S KIDS heap shame and abuse on their parents, drink from dirty, ashtrays, and play basketball in the living room. "Adult High" sounds like "Summertime Blues", with the addition of hand-claps and angst-y Adult Contemporary lyrics. They're fun, the singer sounds like a wiseass, and the guitar leads are kinda cool in a pre-heroin Steve Jones kinda way. They're a boozy, bluesy punk rock sort of outfit that chug along toward some unknown destination. "The Honeymoon's Over" is slow. "Respect Me" is fast and boasts some winning maracas and harp atop a patented Bo Diddley beat. "Animal Instinct" is good. (JH)
(Get Hip, PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15233, www.gethip.com)

PROTEST THE HERO – "A Calculated Use of Sound" CD

Political punk from Ontario with an array of vocal styles and tempos, from bouncy breakdowns, and acoustic parts, to speedy hardcore. Long and thought-out lyrics deal with war, terrorism, and homophobia. (AD)
(Underground Operations, PO Box 13, Ajax, Ontario, L1S JC2, CANADA)

THE PUBES – "Wow Baby! Let's Go Wheelin'!" CD

Why oh why did you have to call yourselves the PUBES?!? Usually when a band has a name this bad, the music reflects that, but in this case that's not true. The music has an early 80s SoCal feel, and there're some good songs here ("Jill's a Jerk," "Emo Kids," "Everything Bothers the PUBES") and some really funny songs ("Psychedelic SkinHead," "Robot Girl"), but dudes, change your name. (DP)
(Roadhouse Tunes, 9102 Edwards Dr, St. Louis, MO 63132, www.the-pubes.com)

PUT-ONS – "Jack Kevorkian Gift Certificate / Kleenex"

I reviewed a CD by these guys a few months back that was decent. The two songer here is even stronger although it has only two songs. The A-side is a catchy, punky power pop ditty in the '78-meets-skinny-tie-rock vein. The flip is the GEN X song (the band not the self-pitying youth movement). A good 45! (RL)
(Puke 'n' Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92831)

RAEIN- CD

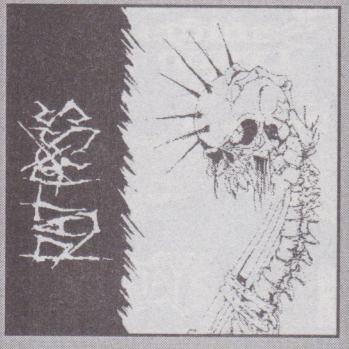
If FUNERAL DINER and TWELVE HOUR TURN had babies, they would come out just as angsty, disturbed, and black hair/white belt as this band sounds. (MM)
(Ebullition, PO Box 680 Goleta, CA 93116)

RANDY – "Cheater" EP

Three tracks from these smart-assed Swedes. This was already released as an extended version on CD last year. This is RANDY at their best—straightforward, scathing, and rocking. "Stepping Out" is a straight-up anthem. I always felt that this band could be special if they just didn't jerk-off so much. (AD)
(Busted Heads, PO Box 275, 901 06 Umea, SWEDEN)

RASH – "…Gorelandia" CD

Powerful, raw crusty hardcore attack from Guadalupe, Mexico. This is their second full- length. The mix is heavy on the kick-drum, resulting in the head and neck moving in a quick back and forth



motion. The barking vocalist reminds me of the old singer of BLOWN TO BITS if he were singing in Spanish. The simple but effective black and white packaging, including the lyrics written in both Spanish and English, reinforces the great feeling of DIY. Nice. (WM)
(Reacciona, Apdo. Postal 1946, C.P. 64001, Monterrey, N.L., MEXICO)

RAT PISS – "Sit Down" EP

Swan song six-track EP from this now defunct Oklahoma band, who were around in the mid to late 90s. Recorded in 1998, these guys hark back to mid 80s US hardcore. A less urgent, more serious HATED YOUTH, perhaps? Pissed off intelligent lyrics aimed at the usual suspects, but with some nice twists. "Say it Don't Spray it" (if I'm hearing it right) gives a good kick in the ass to "PC punks." A decent listen and a cool document from a place where there probably was not a lot of this going on. (RR)
($5 ppd: Dropped At Birth, c/o Neil, 7 Saunders Pl, Raby 2566 NSW, AUSTRALIA)

RESPIRA – "A Still Silhouette" CD

Alternating between clean, quiet guitar parts and slightly second-rate JAWBREAKER melodies, RESPIRA at least conjure up the feeling of something new. Nifty little flourishes like bells add sweetness and driving rhythms up the energy level, but I still found myself wanting something more. Maybe it's the fact that I just can't see the members of bands like this doing anything at shows other than standing around. Whatever it is, if RESPIRA didn't take four minutes to get to the rocking part of each song, perhaps they would be quite a good band. Unfortunately, emo-ish meolodic bands rarely get more punk as they progress, so I may be clinging to a dying dream. (MX)
(Exotic Fever, no address, www.exoticfever.com)

RIFU – "Dead End Street" LP

OK, I think I've got it: take a little bit of TURBONEGRO, some of REFUSED's riffs, some metal breakdowns, and a sincere desire to change the world, and I think RIFU should then appear in front of your eyes. The ideals and conviction are so inspiring that I wish I could have had a better record to go with them. The songs are perhaps too long, and the performance seemingly lacks guts. This could be really, really good, maybe even great if they keep at it, which I sincerely hope they do. Right now, it just sounds kind of half-baked. (MX)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords.de)

RINGWORM / TERROR – split EP

You know, I am sitting here listening to RINGWORM's side of this EP, and I can't help thinking how much I would have enjoyed this back in the mid-90s. Maybe my musical taste has progressed, or maybe this musical style has just gotten stale. I mean for what it's worth, this is solid metal-edge hardcore in the vein of INTEGRITY, but it just didn't grab me like I was hoping. TERROR (who is apparently the hot shit right now) goes down the tried and true path of fast hardcore fused with thumping breakdowns. I found them to be very similar to the singer's previous band, BURIED ALIVE. (RC)
(Deathwish, www.deathwishinc.com)

ROCK THE LIGHT - "Let's Do Something We'll Both Regret" CD

ROCK THE LIGHT successfully pull off that retro sound without sounding old and tired so you won't think you stumbled upon your dad's record collection when you listen to them. I hear a little bit of T REX going on here, and I swear, "Atomic Picnic" made me think of that BLUE CHEER video that they show on the K-Tel commercial, you know the one where the camera zooms in and out really fast with the psychadelic visual effects. Members of various Sacto bands (FM KNIVES, BANANAS, MILHOUS USA) are/were in ROCK THE LIGJHT. Engineered by Chris Woodhouse, who proves you can get a big rock sound without big bucks. (DP)
(Sacramento Media, Inc., PO Box 705, Sacramento, CA 95812, disco-joe2@hotmail.com)

ROCK THE LIGHT- "Mermaid Skyline" EP

This band from California's capitol (you figure it out) rocks it, much to the same effect of the beloved SEWER TROUT, with a touch of off-the-hookness like the FLESHIES. I don't know what the fuck a "Mermaid Skyline" is—if anybody else does, please let me know. Sounds foofy if you ask me. (MM)
(Rock the Light, PO Box 705, Sacramento, CA 95812)

THE RUBBER CITY REBELS – "Pierce My Brain" LP

I'm not exactly sure what is going on here, but I'm gonna take a stab and I'm thinking that I'm pretty right on. I remember the RUBBER CITY REBELS being one of the first punk bands and that they had a single that wasn't easy to find, but also never became a big deal collector's item. I don't recall that they ever had a full length, but the sleeve indicates that this is licensed from Smog Veil Records. A closer look reveals that some of the songs were written in 1975, while others were written in 2002. So, I'm guessing that this is another of those reformation projects that I've grown increasingly skeptical of. I owe it to you to tell you, however, that many of the 2002 songs on this record are fucking good, possibly great, songs. The songs are catchy in a very 1977 style, but you don't get the feeling that it's just a bunch of old fucks with nothing better to do. There's even a respectable tribute to Stiv Bators. I was not prepared for this being a quality disc, but feel like I should give credit where credit is due. (Or are the kids calling it "props" these days?) (KK)
(Munster, www. Munster-records.com)

RUNNAMUCKS – "Of a Different Breed" LP

The RUNNAMUCKS have a "werewolf" fixation, as evidenced by their choice of cover artwork—maybe *Of a Different Breed* was recorded during a full moon (sounds like it). Once, long long ago,

I woulda described their sonic style as "fast hardcore", but the term's come to mean something far different and the old shorthand no longer applies. The RUNNAMUCKS have a breathless, hoarse sound learned at the School of Hard Knocks—mangled, garbled and utterly out of hand. It's sorta 1984-style "thrash" meant to be heard through a haze of teenage sweat and seen through a fog of cigarette smoke and exhaust fumes. Y'know, *wontoothreefour* and into the big buzzsaw whirlwind of frenzied circle-dancing. Lyric-wise they're all about "Detonation", "Graveyard", "In for the Kill", that sorta doom-and-gloom zombie rampage deal. Wild noise that appeals to me on both a visceral and nostalgic level. (JH)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931)

RUPTURE – "Space Ape" LP

Limited pressing of early RUPTURE circa '92/'93. The recordings are pretty decent—you can feel their "don't care, fuck you" attitude just oozing through. This band inspires a lot of hatred and hostility from those easily offended and the watchdog punkers out there, and reading the lyrics I can understand their problems with this now legendary Hatecore band. RUPTURE is definitely not for the squeamish, but it's obvious to me that there are a lot of people who are into this Australian group. The singer killed himself a few years ago but it doesn't look like their releases have slowed any. From what I've been told, this particular LP is sold out. (WM)
(First Blood Family, PO Box 1766, Madison, WI 53701)

S.T.R.E.E.T.S. – "Bobognargnar" CD

Old school skate punk that sounds right outta 1987. It reminds me of BEYOND POSSESSION and all those bands, also at time a Rollins-era BLACK FLAG (or maybe BL'AST! would be a better comparison) springs to mind. It's a little too metal for me, I hope things aren't going in that direction again—I can't be bothered to grow my hair at this point in my life. (AD)
(Globalsymphonic, no address)

SAME DAY SERVICE – "Waiting for Tomorrow" CD

This all-female trio sounds like a cross between LIMP and FABULOUS DISASTER, with a MILLENCOLIN lyrical and theme feel. If you like those bands you will probably think this is all right too. (JF)
(PO Box 41454, Austin, TX 78704)

SANITYS DAWN / YACOPSAE – split CD

Whoa, this is an intense rapid-fire thrash attack consisting of two bands from Germany. SANITYS DAWN start things off with an eye-watering blast of thrashing grind. They actually incorporate hints of somewhat slower tempos throughout many of their songs. I thought this gave the songs some interesting flair. They even do a DYSTOPIA and a SLIME cover....yeah, go figure. But you know, when it comes to insane ear melting thrash (say in the vein of HELLNATION), YACOPSAE is going to give you your money's worth. They just go apeshit and beat their instruments into the next century. You already know if you need this or not. (RC)
(Regurgitated Semen, c/o Sandro Gessner, Str. Des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpollnitz, GERMANY, www.skrupel@web.de)

THE SCARLETT LETTER – "Scattered Smothered and Covered" CD

This has to be one of the more interesting releases I have heard in a while. The songs are straight up, fast-as-hell thrashing hardcore mixed in with occasional melodic pop and emoish elements. There is even some occasional blast beats. The production is top notch on this and the vocals are great forceful blasts of anger and aggression. This is discography CD and all the songs have been previously released. When it was all said and done I ended up liking this CD. Though it is an odd mix of styles, I didn't find the melodic moments overwhelming or distracting from the blasting punk that lies beneath. (RC)
(Hater Of God, PO Box 666 Troy, NY 12181)

SCARRED FOR LIFE – "Is This the Price of Freedom?"- EP

This D-Beat is very well. More thrashy and techno than most of this style. Silly cover art, and (sorry Raygunn) stilted, stale lyrics. Musically, better than most. (JA)
(Despotic, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801)

SCATTERED FALL – "A Short Story of Betrayal..." CD

Good stuff. Five punk rocking songs the hit the ground running, reminding me of GRIMPLE, HOLIER THAN THOU, and a little old BAD RELIGION. Solid release, hope to hear more. (AS).
(Scattered Fall, PO Box 691451, Stockton, CA 95269)

SCHIFOSI – "Seed Remains Sown" EP

Schifosi is a five-piece crust group from Melbourne, Australia. I've been having pretty good luck getting to review some rad records coming out of Australia lately. This super heavy crust attack is no exception. Doom-laden metallic double bass crust mayhem with intensely brutal female vocals. Damn, this girl has a serious growl. Tough as hell hardcore mixed with gloomy melodic guitars give this record an overwhelmingly depressing feel with a shitload of emotion and intensity. (LG)
(Schifosi, PO Box 242, Northcote 3070 VIC AUSTRALIA, www.schifosi.nomasters.org)

SCREWJACK / THE ENTROPY PROJECT – split LP

Here you get two bands from the Northwest that are no longer together, and according to the insert these recordings are at least a few years old. SCREWJACK punches its way through nine songs of hectic emoish hardcore. Lots of time changes and influences are at play here, and they work together well.

The ENTROPY PROJECT is definitely a lot more metal-sounding. Metal-fueled mid-tempo riffs swirling around heavy breakdowns, mixed together with melodic "passoinate" screamo…uh it didn't work for me, but it may be your cup of tea. (RC)
(Excursion, PO Box 20224 Seattle, WA 98102, www.excursionrecords.com)

THE SHEMPS / TO HELL AND BACK - split EP

Roly poly Bill Florio, number one *Maximum* columnist, and his assorted band of east coast muck savages, dirt bikers, and speed frreaks throw up a rollicking foursome of garage rockers. Bashed out in frantic style, just as urgent and brash as those once-leaders of the pack the MOTARDS, those young pretenders the REATARDS, and a little bit of the obnoxiousness of the CANDY SNATCHERS. Next up, TO HELL AND BACK, relying more on the rock and less on the roll. Big guitars, big sound, and a slight nod into hardcore, making this another worthwhile listen. Comparisons? Just fuckin' buy the thing and figure it out yourself. (SD)
(Gloom, www.gloomrecords.com)

SINOLA – "Fathers and Sons" CD

Sincere emo rock from Massachusetts. 12 tunes that could easily be compared to a early 90s San Diego Gravity records sound and late 80s Dischord stuff. I can imagine having this as a sound track while driving across country and watching the landscapes unfold through the car window. Thinking fellers music. Good stuff. (AS)
(Chernobyl, 82 Montague Rd, Amherst, MA 01002, www.chernobylmedia.com)

SKARP – "1 in 5" EP

Seattle's crustcore attack SKARP is back with this three-song EP. They play doom-laden crust with guttural female vocals that are truly feral and ferocious. The EP comes with a poster sporting a bunny, a haunted house, and a pile of skulls. Not for the faint at heart. My only question to the recording is that I seriously can't figure out what speed I'm supposed to play it on. It says 33 rpm but my ears tell me 45. Either way it rocks, but I'd feel a lot better if I know—it's keeping me awake at night. (LG)
(Pull The Trigger, 1601 S.Main St. #1, Seattle, WA 98144)

SKITKIDS – "Skitfucked by the State" 12"

Now this is the fucking shit, raw Swedish hardcore that borrows heavy from the TOTALITÄR model. Fist-pumping, thrashing hardcore that slows down now and then for some amazingly rousing circle pit-inducing good times. Fuck. I'll say it again—FUCK! Really, really, really fucking great. Totally classic. (MT)
(PO Box 578, 220 Copenhagen N., DENMARK, maretidt@ofir.dk)

SLOGGY – "Jalopy Music" EP

Are we beginning to see some influence spreading out from the likes of LILI Z. and NAZIS FROM MARS and VOLT? This "band" has the same feel as some of those recordings, without the over-the-top creativity of, say, NAZIS FROM MARS, but solid nonetheless. Techo-punk done bedroom-style, with ludes and sterno in equal quantities off to the side for inspiration. This 7" could have come out on some obscure European label in 1980, instead the copyright reads 2003. (RW)
(Dull City, Marmorveien 14A, 9800 Vadso, NORWAY)

SMALL BROWN BIKE – "Nail Yourself to the Ground" CDEP

Now I am sure that this CD is going to get some good, if not great, reviews along the way, especially when I consider that there are some excellent songwriting and dynamic structures on this disc. This review will not be one of those. The reason why? The magazine is called *Maximum Rock 'n' Roll,* not *Punk Planet.* That means we review stuff that falls into the punk category, not college/alternative rock. Oh yeah, for a sonic description, SMALL BROWN BIKE sounds like a more complex, softer HOT WATER MUSIC on this release. (JF)
(No Idea)

SOCIETY OF THE SPECTACLES – "Tootsie Roll Pop Art" EP

Ambitious punk 7" here, trying to maintain aggression without succumbing to cliché. Reminds at times of the CHARM CITY SUICIDES, especially when they launch into their MINUTEMEN cover. I will say that these guys could have been playing straight-up Gravity-style screamo six years ago (in my opinion), but the talent is currently being drawn towards this garage-level punk attack. *And I ain't complaining*! (RW)
(We're From the Beach, 1205 Faymont Ave, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266)

SOLGER – "Codex 1980" CD

Seattle one-single wonders from 1980 (duh!) who seem to be all over the joint on the re-issue/bootleg circuit. Not bad for a band who only did one single and about six shows! This disc compiles their 7", remixed and remastered, along with the original 7" recording (which is muddy, to say the least) and some really rough live gear. The remastered tracks are definitely worth checking out—super raw and snotty like a more hardcore GERMS, they all look about fourteen too…genius. (TB)
(Empty, PO Box 12034, Seattle, WA 98102)

SOMMERSET – "More Songs From Last Century" CD

A collection of this New Zealand band's LP and two EPs. If you like HOT WATER MUSIC or STRIKE ANYWHERE or anything in between, check this band out. Strong powerful vocals and heavy guitars done in an urgent fashion. Maybe RANDY too? A German release from a great band that is apparently regrouping minus an original guitar player. (RL)
(Rockstar, verbindungsstrasse 9, 52080 Aachen, GERMANY, www.sommerset.net)

SPROUTS – "Pins and Glasses" EP

Kudos to Mr. Vinyl Assigner, who nails it again. The label hype on this 7" is GUITAR WOLF meets JELLYROLL ROCKHEADS, and that's not too far off, but the emphasis is on the JELLYROLL side of the sonic spectrum for these Japanese lads. So you get a frenzied garage attack played with hardcore drumming style 90% of the time. The live appeal is obvious from listening to this, this band would be awesomely fun to see. Obviously, these guys want to dress well and still play a hardcore-based punk attack. 20 track 7" still plays at 45!!! (RW)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY, 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

STAINS – "John Wayne Was a Nazi / Born to Die"

Based on appearances, this would *seem* to be a reissue of the single hardcore stalwarts MDC released back in 1980 (when they were still billed as the STAINS and called the Lone Star State home), but all is not right. Rather than the mid-tempo, more classically "punk rock" versions that appeared on the original disc, you got the versions from their 1982 debut LP. Faster, thrashier, and not quite as quaint or catchy in my opinion. What's the deal? Historical revisionism? (JH)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords.de)

STEEL RULES DIE / WINTER IN JUNE – split CD

WINTER IN JUNE plays super melodic emo hardcore with slicing guitar interludes that remind me a bit of STRIKE ANYWHERE. Super driving guitars, interesting rhythm dynamics, weary painfilled vocals. I think I detect a little bit of a Swedish or Scandi influence, Melody and pain. STEEL RULES DIE have a kind of old-school emo hardcore vibe thing going on. Melodic vocals and some dark guitar rhythms slow down with tuneful harmonies with popish sang vocals. Tribal rhythms intertwine with catchy pop hooks. Reminiscent of a slightly tougher HOT WATER MUSIC. For fans of this type of genre, this CD should be a real ear tickler. (LG)
(Engineer, 1 Chandos Rd, Tunbridge Wells , Kent , TN1 2NY, ENGLAND)

STRIKER – "No Bears on the Tracks" CD

Killer 80s-style Swedish hardcore—ANTI-CIMEX, CRUDE SS—from a more recent band of old-timers, the youngest being 35. International hardcore at its finest. This is the band's two demos on one CD. Includes the drummer from RÖVSVETT. Get it. (WM)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

SUGARBOMBS – "Tear Their World Down, Build Up Our Own" CD

A solid debut from these young Germans. The BOMBS play some solid 90s style hardcore with tendencies toward SNUFF. The lyrics are well thought out with correct English, and the vocals are fluid without heavy accents. They even throw in some rocked out Woody Guthrie and e.e. cummings. Nice touches to a fine debut. (HM)
(Rockstar, Verbindungssrasse 9, 52080 Rockcity Aachen, GERMANY, **www.rockstarrecords.de**, www.sugarbombs.net)

TEEN IDOLS – "Nothing to Prove" CD

Another solid effort from this poppy punk band. These guys have been around for awhile now and they keeping cranking out the catchy tunes in the GROOVIE GHOULIES, HUNTINGTONS, and TRAVOLTAS vein. Good stuff. (RL)
(Fueled By Ramen, www.fueledbyramen.com)

THOSE POOR BASTARDS – "The Bastard Agenda" EP

THOSE POOR BASTADS play fast thrashy crust. They play with a driving demon like speed, hellish screams, and fast-as-fuck guitars. Fuck, it hurts so good. Awesome. Singer sounds truly tormented. Neckbreaking speed. Slow interludes of heavy crunching guitars. What more do you need? Good job guys. It would have been cool to see some lyrics. (LG)
(Those Poor Bastards, TPB c/o Reiterate, PO Box 287, Harwinton, CT 06791)

THRETNING VERSE – "Time for War" EP

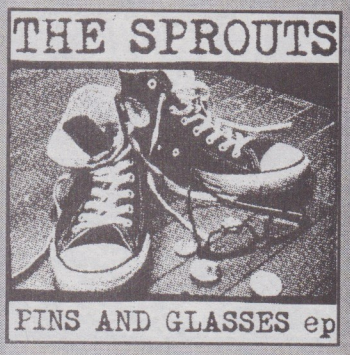
Four excellent aggression- packed punk rock tracks! Heavy guitar and pounding drums gives way to a leading fiery female vocalist, backed up by the boys. Great! Let's hear more! (SR)
(Puke n' Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834)

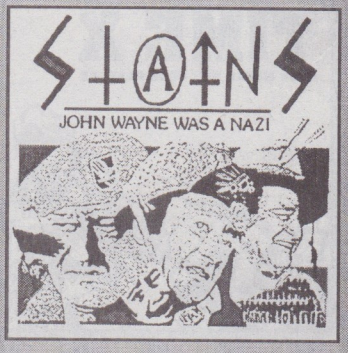
TIME X - "Good Moves Not Good Players" EP

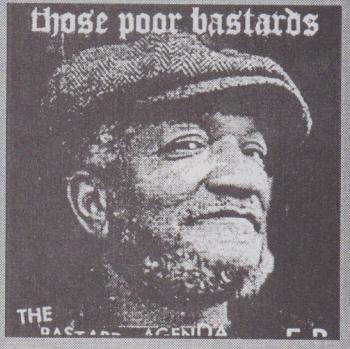
I am not sure what the title means, but this record isn't half bad. Straight edge hardcore from Lisbon, Portugal that borrows from everything from CHAMPION to GORILLA BISCUITS (not really the broadest spectrum if you think about it). I could have done without the Indiana Jones intro at the beginning of the record. Holy shit! Wait, this record just got ten times better on side B! The track "Sober Youth Go!" opens up with what sounds like a prepubescent boy screaming with this haunting reverb effect. I almost expected someone to yell "Wipe Out!" This happens at least four other times on the song and it had me and my friend rolling on the ground in pain. Is this a "sober scream?" This record rules just for this song alone. Has to be heard to be believed. (CC)
(Refuse, PO Box 7, 02-792 Warszawa 78, POLAND)

TISCHLEREI LISCHITZKI – LP

This is so German I can barely review it. A little like post-*Pagan Icons* SACCHARINE TRUST. Uh, lo-tech NOMEANSNO. Punk leaning towards the garage with some CRASS wild guitar thrown in. (JA)
(M. Brebeck, Schildsteinweg 54/56, 21339 Luenburg, GERMANY)







TORCHA SHED – "Nihilism on the Prowl" EP

Conceived in California and executed in Wolverhampton, UK, this trio of medium-speed punk tunes recalls the sarcastic irony of very early SUBHUMANS UK filtered through understated production that might have come from an American garage. "Gabriel's Hounds," with its hypnotic repeating guitar riff, is maybe the most impressive of the mid-tempo songs here. Above average. (SS)
(Puke n Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834)

TOTALITÄR / TRAGEDY – split EP

These are the bands that, for a single weekend of shows (the "Pointless Fest," I'm talking), draw black-clad kids from the four corners of the earth like powerful magnets sweeping up paper clips. Two songs each from the best of the US and Sweden. No funny melodic stuff from TRAGEDY on this split—it's heavy (of course), driving, consuming, intense, gripping. Not my favorite recording for them, though, about on par with their first LP's. TOTALITÄR's two are no disappointment, no surprise. It's all about pace and stamina, and these guys have had everybody's fists in the air for an admirable stretch. Do I really need to sell this to you? Come on. (AC)
(Armageddon, PO Box 56, Providence, RI 02909)

TRAPDOOR FUCKING EXIT – "Devils' Egg" CD

The excitement and passion of early 90s Bay Area pop punk meets the matured songwriting of early 90s DC sound without a trace of any tired predictable emo nonsense. Not at all the HOT WATER MUSIC rehash I expected. These four songs are interesting without becoming overly technical… Kind of like FUEL, but completely different… Worth hearing for yourself. (VH)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604-4636)

TREEPHORT – "Buy this Album or the Terrorists Win" CD

Having made the joke numerous times since the word "terrorist" became a part of our everyday lexicon, I'm stunned that it took this long for someone to use this album title. Beyond the mild hilarity of the jokingly flag-waving cover, there's actually some good catchy punk here with funny lyrics about "scene nazis." However, there are also some questionable words that seem to imply that homosexuals are nothing more than guys who couldn't, you know, "make it" with the ladies. Between that and the fact that, of 17 tracks, there are only 6 actual songs, this just barely misses my seal of approval. (MX)
(Brand Name, PO Box 17533, Atlanta, GA 30316, www.brandnamerecords.com)

TROUPE DICOUPE – "So Young, So Desperate" CD

Wow, they made me work to figger it out, but this is a years-after-the-fact release of one of those "other" bands that used to be in the CBGB's/Max's Kansas City scene circa 1977-80 (or so). If you ever see a reproduction of one of the old ads for those club's shows, it's always one legendary show after another (BAD BRAINS or MISFITS in 1979 anyone?) and then a bunch of bands playing on Wednesday night you've never seen mentioned anywhere else, because they didn't put any records out. Here is one of those bands, with a double CD. The sound is all over the map; they were a bigger band with female vocals, bongos, sax, trombone, guitar…the works. It's new wave rock that has barely escaped the hippie era, so there's a strong element of camp running through everything, like a glam band trying on punk for fun. There are elements of super-early BLONDIE, TELEVISION and a dash of *Rocky Horror Picture Show* for good measure. A very weird CD and a truly transporting you-are-there experience. Any real collector of 70s NY punk should own this to truly get a sense of the spectrum of bands that played the area, outside of the 30 groups that get endlessly mentioned ad nauseum. (RW)
(Frowning Camel, no address)

TURTLEHEAD - "Bleeding Hearts and Burnouts" CD

I think these dudes might be Scottish. Regardless, they turn in a fine disc worth of old-style emo. I don't mean backpack shit. Y'know, back in the day when emo meant RITES OF SPRING and DAG NASTY. They remind me a lot, actually, of V. CARD, or perhaps DIGGER with less polish, and more bite. Good stuff. (RK)
(Leatherback, www.misty.se)

U.B.R. – "Corpus Delicti" LP

Hopefully some of you are already familiar with this old Yugoslavian hardcore band—either through their track on *MRR's Welcome to 1984* LP or via the Crust War reissue of some of their demo tracks last year. Just those two references alone should give you some idea where these Slavs are coming from—raw, stripped down hardcore from 1983-4. No metal, no melody—just a juggernaut of speedy pounding drums, distorted guitars and shouted vocals. Think early AGNOSTIC FRONT without the thug edge. Keep in mind too, that this was being produced in a country where one might "disappear" for playing such music. This LP serves as a discography of sorts—contiaining their *Corpus Delicti* EP, *Kategorija* demo and their tracks from the *Ka'e Alternativa* cassette compilation—not a complete discography, but a good start for certain for anyone looking to learn a little about the history of punk outside of its normal Western confines. My only complaint is that I wish that it had come with more infromation about the band, the scene from which it sprang, etc. (MT)
(Falsanja Kol'ko's)

ULCERRHOEA – "Line and Row" CD

Sometimes predictability can be a really good thing. But in the case of this 53 song ULCERRHOEA CD, it is not working for me. The songs are short and fast with some evident Swedish D-beat worship, but the ANTI CIMEX influence seems to be style more than sound. Take away the MOB 47 email address and what you're left with boils down to some pretty dull sounding cookie cutter grind. (VH)
(Rescued From Life c/o Clay Newell, PO Box 14821, TX 76117)

UNPERSONS – "III" CD

Unpersons play a blend of emoish metal hardcore. Gruff tough angry screams, chunky slicing guitars, metal breakdowns, grungy dynamic experimental noise mayhem. Fans of CONVERGE should appreciate this. They are technically well executed and songs are played at interesting tempos and rhythms. The faster parts will definitely get your blood boiling. (LG)
(Loss, PO Box 582, Eastlake, CO 80614-0582)

UNRUH - "Misery Strengthened Faith" LP & 8"

Fuck yeah! I dig the late, great UNRUH. This is a long overdue collection of their first LP, split 7", self-titled 7", and their cut from the legendary *Cry Now, Cry Later* comps on Pessimiser (home to their awesome *Setting Fire To Sinking Ships* record). UNRUH plays totally uncompromising, brutal metallic hardcore. Those into GEHENNA, RORSCHACH, WELLINGTON, STRUCTURE OF LIES, and/or SOCIAL INFESTATION would like. (WM)
(King of the Monsters, 8341 E. San Salvador, Scottsdale, AZ 85258)

THE VACANCY – "EP" CD

Well, it's officially time to shut down A-F Records. In three straight months they have released three horrendous-to-average CDs, and they have all fallen into my unfortunate hands. Shitty crooning vocals that make me want to reenact the torture scene from *Reservoir Dogs* are the icing on this mediocrity cake of recycled hooks and cookie-cutter breakdowns. I'm thrilled that AGAINST ME never did a record on this label, as I am thoroughly convinced that bands like these would suck the very life from Tom Gabel's soul. I feel violated. (MX)
(A-F, PO Box 71266, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, www.a-frecords.com)

VIOLENT MINDS - "Know It All" EP

It's nice to see that My War Records is finally getting the respect and attention of the rest of the hardcore/punk scene, and not just the straight edge scene. VIOLENT MINDS is that band to push Matt and My War Records over the edge (no pun intended). Want to know why you could never get a copy of the first SNOBS record? By the time the average *MRR* reader caught wind of it, every straight edge record collector fiend had already purchased three copies for themselves (I bought two). The old saying goes something like this: you can take the straight edge out of hardcore, but you can't take the hardcore out of straight edge (otherwise you'll have a straight edge metal band that thinks they are a hardcore band). Make sense? Probably not. Let me put it another way: There used to be this killer straight edge band called KNOCKDOWN out of Pennsylvania. They had an early 80s hardcore sound similar to AGNOSTIC FRONT, with a heavy straight edge influence. Probably the most underrated record to come out that year. The singer broke edge and joined NO WARNING. Then he joined *this* band on vocals, which sounds exactly like KNOCKDOWN without the straight edge influence. It might as well be the second KNOCKDOWN record. In other words, this record fucking rules. (CC)
(My War, 36 Kings Circle, Malvern, PA 19355)

VIRUS – "Benefits of War" EP

Just so you know, innovation and progression aren't necessarily good things; case in point, the VIRUS—these boys are 100% UK '82 worship and they *rule*! Walking a fine line between the in-your-face aggression of early ONE WAY SYSTEM and the driving street anthems of BLITZ (they do a great cover of "Nations On Fire"), every track is a winner. The band only loses punk points because two of the members are wearing leather pants, which is a no-no (haven't you read the rule book? Leather is soooo '84). Otherwise this is a cracking piece of nostalgia! (TB)
(Dirty Punk, BP 302, 59666 Villenuve D'Asco Cedex, FRANCE)

VON ZIPPERS - "The Crime is Now" CD

More garage rock 'n' roll from this long-running band. Actually a lot more listenable than I expected. Having never checked them out, I assumed they were another shitty Estrus band. These guys have more 1-2-3-Go! in them than most of the bands I imagine they get lumped in with. Some ripping guitar and buried vocals give it almost an instrumental feel at times, but thankfully with very little surf sounds. The lyrics are very political, unlike most bands of their ilk. WHO riffs occasionally sneak into "Blue Suit Bullies" and "Put on the Brakes" and sound right at home. Not groundbreaking or essential by any means, but a pleasant surprise. The Rat-Fink-like art is hard to stomach. (RR)
(Estrus, PO Box 2125, Bellingham, WA 98225)

WAXWING – "Nobody Can Take What Everybody Owns" LP

Oh, goody, a staggeringly bad release ripe for the skewering. I hate to say this because I have a lot of respect for Cody Votolato's guitar playing in the BLOOD BROTHERS, but this pop/emo band that he's got going with his brother Rocky (who is also an aspiring film star…it's not pretty) is just about the worst thing I've heard in my entire life. I wish I could find some kind of redeeming feature, but honestly, the best thing I can say about this is that the vinyl is a really pretty shade of purple. To paraphrase the new PAINT IT BLACK album, less DASHBOARD CONFESSIONAL, more…well, just about anything else. (MX)
(Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102)

WEAVING THE DEATHBAG – "Lost in the World" EP

Second EP from these Wisconsin punks—complex, quick paced hardcore punk that never really hits light speed, with heartfelt lyrics that stand in contrast to the overly negative crap that seems to be the cliché of the day. Honest and frustrated, but a glimmer that tomorrow might just be better. Great. (MT)
(Born To Die, 1904 NW 31 St, Oklahoma, OK 73118, borntodierecords@yahoo.com)

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? – "Euro Trash Tour 2003" EP

The hometown heros WHN? bring us seven new brutal modern day thrash classics. I'm listening to this record, rocking out and totally digging this. But, I just keep thinking "…no, mom, I just wanted a Pepsi, just a Pepsi mom." You know, like SUICIDAL TENDENCIES (duh). In all seriousness, though, this record fucking kills, it's totally relentless in its attack! So don't fuck around, flip up the brim of yer baseball hat, pull up yer tube socks, jump on yer skateboard and then head on down to yer local record store and get this! You'll be stoked. WAAAAAAA!!!!!! (AS).
(Flower Violence, Kapellenstrasse 16, 69469 Weinheim, GERMANY, www.flowerviolence.com)

WITH ALL SINCERITY – "The Age Where Nothing Fits" CD

They waste no time on this and go blazing straight out of the gates with a chaotic mix of crazed metal/hardcore packed with blast beats and pulsating breakdowns. They really throw this one all over the place with tons of spastic time changes, pulling together elements of metal, grind, hardcore, and even some emo. And the vocalist's shrill growls and grunts sound like he swallowed a box of tacks before they recorded. They go down the road opened by bands like DARKEST HOUR and CONVERGE, but don't necessarily sound like either one of them. I have been pretty critical of a lot of the metalcore stuff coming out these days, but this release has definitely caught my ear. (RC)
(Pluto, PO Box 1201, McKinney, TX 75070, www.plutorecords.com)

XDISCIPLEX A.D. "Blood Feud" 7"

Decently executed metal-core with strong Christian overtones out of Erie, Pennsylvania. XPassX. (CC)
(Facedown, PO Box 477, Sun City, CA 92586)

ZOE – "From Hell" EP

Dark crust from Japan with a relentless attack (like a horror movie villian that just keeps coming to kill). The third songs galloping pace really got me going, unfortunately the pre-mature fade-out left me disappointed at its abruptness. Overall impression is that this is a good record and fans of AMEBIX, ANTI CIMEX, and the Minneapolis crust style would find much to like here. (WM)
(Crust War, 1-28-3A Shikitu-Nishi 2, Naniwa-Ku, Osaka City, 556-0017 JAPAN, crustwaroverseas@earthlink.net)

V/A – "Backyard City Rockers" CD

Wow, I didn't know people still listened to ska. This comp features 25 ska (with horns and everything!) and punk bands, mixed like a peanutbutter and jelly smoothie. Personally, I'd prefer a dirty martini, a diry blonde, even a dirty room, but not a mix like this. I won't debate if punk is dead or not, but ska should have ended with the two tone era in '79. However, if this is your thing, skank to your little rude heart's content. (MM)
(Smelvis, PO Box 1779 Wilmington, CA 90744)

V/A – "Cock 'n' Roll: The World's Sleaziest Rock Bands" CD

For those who like their rock the sleazier the better, here's just the comp for ya. All tackily packaged in hot pink zebra fur with photos of women you wouldn't bring home to mama, 26 bands do 26 songs about all those things your mama warned you about-sex, drugs, Satan, bad girls, driving too fast, you get the gist. HELLSIDE STRANGLERS, DEVIL'S DAY OFF, PORN ROCK, GUNHACK, SPEEDFREAKS, BIG BLOCK HITCHCOCK, DOUBLE BARRELED SLINGSHOTS, GASOLHEADS, many more… (DP)
(Sleazegrinder, www.sleazegrinder.com)

V/A – "Disturbing the Peace" CD

This is a compilation of five bands all hailing from the Midwest. It took me a while to figure out exactly what "M.W.H.C." stood for. I lived there for almost nine years, and I don't remember anyone ever using that abbreviation to describe the hardcore coming out of that area. Is there a Midwest hardcore pride that I am not familiar with? Apparently there is, and it involves goatees, beer guts, and wife beaters. INSULT TO INJURY, JOHNNY VOMIT, DEAD END PATH, and DISAVOW pretty much sound like different variations of SHEER TERROR. The last band, the STRUGGLE, were the band that stood out the most. At their best, they reminded me of a slower INFEST. (CC)
(NGS, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL 60559, www.ngsrecords.com)

V/A – "God Drunk More Fuckkk" EP

Five Japanese bands do tribute to the late DEAD KENNEDYS with a set of rippin' cover tunes. ARGUE TRADITION scores with a thrashed-out version of "Kepone Factory" that has an almost Finnish intensity, while PALUKA rocks out with a hyper-accelerated "Let's Lynch the Landlord," highlighted by insane RAW POWER-like vocals. You can almost make out "Nazi Punks Fuck Off" in MORE NOISE FOR LIFE's barrage of white noise—an insane cover that may eclipse the original. The FUTURES and RAZOR'S EDGE also contribute aggressive efforts in a record that turns out to be great fun. Recommended. (SS)
(Skinny Dip, no address)

V/A – "Los Que Alimentan El Odio Con Odio Se Encontraran" CD

This is a great compilation, documenting the Peruvian hardcore/punk scene. It features eight bands, each doing multiple songs, all playing rough hardcore in that awesome international hardcore style (from MG-15 to ANTI-CIMEX and MOB 47 to ARMEGEDOM—all inspired by four spikey-haired Stoke-On-Trent lads in leather and spikes) that belies fury, intensity, rawness, and that indomitable DIY spirit. Comes with a thick booklet full of writings, lyrics, photos, drawings, etc.—all in Spanish, of course.

This is really a great comp and I don't think that there's a single stinker in the bunch, plus the recording quality throughout is good. The bands are: SABOTAGE, INGOBERNABLES, GRITO DE MISERIA, EX-KUPIDOS, LOS REZIOS, GENERACION PERDIDA, CONFRONTO, and S.Q.P. Check it out. (WM)
(Grupo Rojoscuro c/o Patricio (no poner rojoscuro), Casilla 50915, Correo Central, Santiago, CHILE)

V/A – "Losing Your Way, Part 4" EP

Losing doesn't seem to be so bad...a comp with a little something for everybody. Ten bands from across the globe (Japan, Brazil, Sweden, Singapore, US, etc.) tear through one song apiece of ferocious hardcore. Completely diverse and varied in styles from fast screechy hardcore to thrash to grind, it all fits together and sounds great. Bands I've never heard like CIRCLE X, and OUTNAUTS, along with favorites like RUIDO. The speed and intensity don't let up for a second. (VH)
(no address)

V/A – "More From Raw" LP

Raw Records put out some of my favorite 7"s in the UK circa '77/'78. While most people think of the CLASH and the PISTOLS, I think of the KILLJOYS and the USERS. This is a great re-issue of the second Raw records comp which celebrated their first year in existence. Most of these tracks appeared on 7"s that came out during '77/'78, and there is some fantastic '77 snot punk (USERS, SOME CHICKEN, ACME SEWAGE CO, KILLJOYS etc.) here. It's waaay better than any of the *Bloodstains* or *KBD* comps that featured the UK. There are a couple of clunkers, and I would urge you to check out the first Raw Records comp (*Raw Deal*) first, as that really is a classic from start to finish. This comp ain't no slouch, though, and if you dig 70s buzzsaw punk, track it down (there are four extra tracks, too, including a track by the NOW which is stellar). (TB)
(Damaged Goods, PO Box 671, London, E17 9GH, ENGLAND www.damagedgoods.com)

V/A – "More World, Less Bank" EP

I'm assuming that this is supposed to be a compilation criticizing the monetary practices of the World Bank in the "third world"—which in turn leads to the creation of a dependent relationship in the "third world" on the so-called first world nations of the West and Northen hemisphere. It has been argued—and I tend to agree—that this is ruinous towards the devlopment of independent economic infastructure. It's simply good old fashion imperialism with a friendlier face. Sadly, though, this compilation contains no information whatsoever about the World Bank, which leads me to believe that it might just be a catchy slogan, which is nice and all but it makes this sorta feel half ass. Oh well, at least it contains totally fucking great tracks from some of heavier hitters of the crustier side of the punk world. SKITSYSTEM, CLUSTER BOMB UNIT, COMA, HUMAN WASTE, MURDER DISCO X, LIM, UNCLE CHARLES, and CROSSING CHAOS (in order of best to worst tracks on this record) all lay down a heavy duty and high quality soundtrack to chucking rocks at cops. So to sum it all up: intellectually this comp is sorta blah, musically it rips. (MT)
(Blinded Productions, Edgrensgatan 27, 671 50 Arvika, SWEDEN, www.attackfanzine.com)

V/A – "Motormadness, Vol. 2" 10"

Given the format and packaging (race track photo-adorned 45 rpm 10", I was certainly fearing the worst of this six band/six song comp, but the bent on dragpunk (I know there's no dragging pictured on the sleeve, but I defer to convention) and dragpunkabilly (we're talking important categorial distinctions here) on the A side by LORDS OF THE HIGHWAY, MR. GARCIA, and BERND HOVELMEYER & THE NYMPHOMANIACS (nice name, and I like your drum machine, too!) make the whole deal kind of charming in a retro 90s way. Making the package even more "wack" is the B side, with MIKROWELLE's new wave take on "The Happy Organ," SLOGGY's JOY DIVISION-style gloom, and MIKROWELLE's "Asphaltwaver" with its hint of early TSOL gloom. At last, drag-goth! (DD)
(Hell On Wheels, Carlo Dries, 31 Rue Abbe Lemire, l-4208 Esch Aizette, LUXEMBOURG, hellonwheels66@hotmail.com)

V/A – "Non-Conformity, Vol. 1" CD

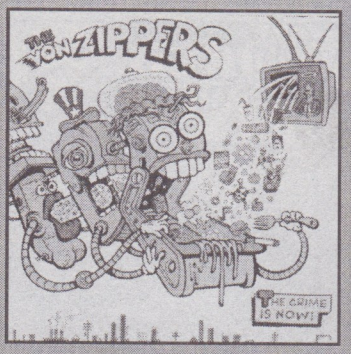
Malaysian punk rock compilation—which runs the gamut from Fat Wreck style melodic hardcore (FREYGYLE) to distort-o-rama BRISTLES style punk (the BOLLOCKS) to snotty East Bay style pop-punk (PUSHER) and everything in between. Good window into a scene most of you seem to want to pretend doesn't exist. (MT)
(Knot, c/o Ahmad, No 401 Blok 17, Seksyen 8, 40000 Shah Alam, Selangor, Peninsular, MALAYSIA, knot_records@yahoo.com)

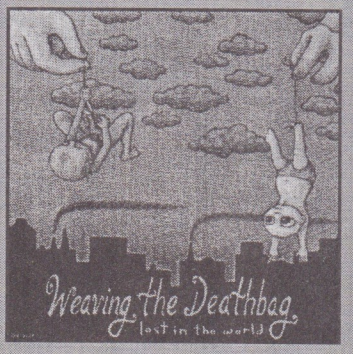
V/A - "Root Damage" LP

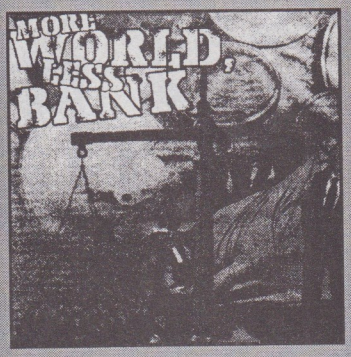
A collection of bluesy rock or blues-influenced garage culled from the Sympathy catalogue. I am figuring this collection is aimed at people who have never heard of the label or any of the bands on it and are BECK completists who need to fill that hole in their collection. Other artists included are R.L. BURNSIDE, BILLY CHILDISH, DAN MELCHIOR, SOLEDAD BROTHERS, MR. AIRPLANE MAN, JACK OBLIVIAN, GIBSON BROS., HOLLY GOLIGHTLY, DEADLY SNAKES and so many more. The double LP has 28 tracks, but for the truly daring, they say the CD has 49. Watch out. (CK)
(Sympathy for the Record Industry)

V/A – "sNOISsES – The Skateboarder Sessions" CD

A modern day skate rock comp from the Sessions skate shop. Featuring the skate rocking of: CLAY WHEELS, MIKE V & THE RATS, FACTION, HEARTACHES, OPERATIC, JOHNNY AND THE DUDES, RAY BARBEE, the HUNNS, and bunch more. Stand outs had to be "Ice Cold Beer" by BARK HARD (John Gibson, Todd Prince), and "Gay Blade" by JOHNNY & THE DUDES (Pete the Ox).







I'm not sure what happened to ole Tom Knox, who now plays in some bad rockabilly band… What are you thinking, Tom? I thought this comp was gonna be cheeseball, but I actually dug it. Pretty cool collection of bands, and skaters that you had no idea played music. Cool. (AS)
(Sessions, 60 Old El Pueblo Rd, Scotts Valley, CA 95066, www.sessionsrecordings.com)

V/A – "The Suburban American Tract-home Project,Vol. 2" CD

A 23-song collection of Chico, California bands? It's hard to tell because the booklet's shitty computer fonts are so blurry much of it's indecipherable. It's too bad, 'cause it looks like a lot of work, thought, and money went in to the 16-page booklet. The bands are all over the musical map—as is the sound quality. None of the bands really jump out at me. GRUG, SLAG, P.A.W.N.S., ACCIDENTS, SMEAT, and eight others chime in with at least one track. REPEAT OFFENDERS do a DEAD BOYS cover. As with most CD comps, it's a mixed bag at best, maybe functioning as a scene document. Can't say I would recommend this to anyone. (RR)
(Manifest Destiny, 142 W. 19th St, Chico, CA 95928)

V/A – "The Suburban American Tract-home Project ,Vol. 3" CD

26 song compilation of Chico hardcore punk bands—all raw, fast and pissed off punk with not really an ounce of wimpy pop punk for miles around. Highlights for me are PUSH BUTTON WARFARE, GRUK, STANDFAST (yeah they're melodic—but by no means are they pop-punk) and KIDS WITH HEADLICE. Nice document of this Central Valley scene. (MT)
(Manifest Destiny, 932 Nord Ave, Chico, CA 95926, manifestdestiny@dangerous-minds.com)

V/A – "Seguiremos Inconformes" CD

A tribute to Mexico's classic hardcore ragers MASSACRE 68—who released a demo and a much sought after LP in their time. Named after (obviously enough) a police massacre of student protestors which occurred in 1968, they played burly-as-fuck hardcore punk that owes much more the Brazilian model set forth by the likes of early RDP and OHLO SECO than the example being put forth in the USA at the time. They are one of my favorites and this compilation brings together some of the finer international hardcore bands to pay tribute to them—highlights are the dead on DESTRUCCION, ANFO, FRONTERRORISMO, FORCA MACABRA and ALCOHOLIC YOUTH tracks. Great! (MT)
(Grabaciones Congaleras, Apartado Postal 1879, 64000 Monterrey, NL, MEXICO, gcongaleras@hotmail.com)

V/A – "The West Coast of the East Coast" CD

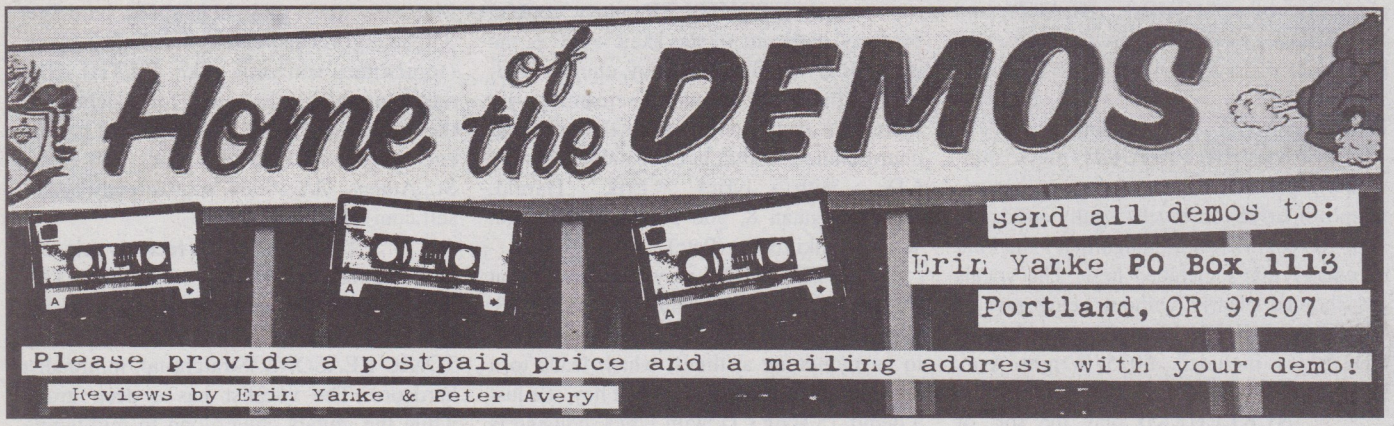
Pittsburgh has one of the best scenes going these days, and here is yet another documentation brought to you by the fine folx at Hard Travelin' Records—ranging from the very BLACK RANDY-esque PAY TOILETS to the chaotic thrashing of INTENSE YOUTH to the power-pop of COUNTER ACTION to the dual vocaled NAUSEA-esque attack of APHASIA (my favorite track!)—Pittsburgh has got it all. This comp is a benefit for the rad Multi-tool project, which is an out growth of the Mr. Roboto Project, and contains a detailed booklet about said project. Totally great and inspiring—please, come and see what punks can do! (MT)
($6 ppd: Hard Travelin', PO Box 8131, Pittsburgh, PA 15217, www.hoperecords.com/hardtravelin)

V/A – "Where the Vile Things Are" CD

What we have here are four new New York hawd-kaw bands (PLEDGE OF RESITANCE, CARNAGE KREW, CONDITION, MORAL TERROR) each which delivers a minimum of four blasts of hawd-kaw that is more fueled by SHEER TERROR and AGNOSTIC FRONT than ANTIDOTE or LIFE'S BLOOD. Skinheads and the US Marine Corps are thanked, and I'm fairly certain the phrase "Mosh you pussies!" has been echoed at each of these band's shows at least once. You like thick-necked hawd-kaw, you'll love this. I, on the other hand, like my hardcore to be free of sports jerseys. (MT)
(NGS, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL 60559, www.ngsrecords.com)

V/A – "Wild Sounds from Frenchy Radio Punk Rock" EP

….Six band French punk comp with no real printed info, just a bunch of computer addresses…..yawn!!!! Volume three of three…..super lo-fi…!!!! Bands included here are JAKES, LITTLE GREEN FAIRY, STARSHIT (who are good), HOLY CURSE, WEAK, and NITROBREW….!!!!! …Some of this shit is OK, but it still falls short of a real big stiff PENIS!!!!! ….also the cover design gets two thumbs down for bad computer art…..sheesh, what's this world coming to??????????????????????????????
(SW)
(Lollipop, 7 Impasse Monsegur, 13016 Marseille, FRANCE, www.chez.com/lollipoprecords)



BLACK BOX rips, straightforward and classic sounding, like early, non-metal POISON IDEA, but slower and without the fancy guitar work. The singer's got a good spitting vocal style, and a good combination of themes of darkness, hope, annoyances, and fighting back. (19 song CD, lyrics included. 3637 Sonoma Ave. #140, Santa Rosa, CA 95405.) (Erin)

THE COBS are two guys from Chicago who play punk rock. I'm not sure how it goes live, but there is guitar, bass, and drums on the recording. Their more serious songs sound like early FIFTEEN meets SCREECHING WEASEL (It's also their best stuff). Their under-20-second songs sound like SCHLONG. Then they have some basic stupid punk songs. Anyway, if this were edited down to a couple songs, it might not be so bad. (15 song CD, no lyrics, no where to go, thecobs@thecobs.com) (Pete)

COYOTE plays rock 'n' roll in a punk way. It's somewhat akin to the INTERNATIONAL NOISE CONSPIRACY. The vocals are sung in a forceful way. The guitars play catchy 70s rock riffs and the songs are mid to up-tempo. (3 song CD, no lyrics, Backstrom, Skebokvarnsvagen 169 3tr, SE-124 52 Bandhagen, Sweden, coyoterock@hotmail.com) (Pete)

FAREWELL HOPE says, "it's not about pain, it's about hate," but I think they're about pain. Emo-hardcore, the kind that makes the kids do that twitch dance. But somehow the straight edge mosh parts make their presence felt, too. The vocals are mostly throaty shouting, with group back-up vocals that are straightforward shouting. ($2 ppd. 4 song CD, lyrics included. 926 Martin Rd., Baltimore, MD 21221.) (Erin)

THE FELDMANS sound like they should be a S.P.A.M. band. They range from goofy pop-punk songs to three chord raggers. All three-band members take part in the vocals so there is a wide range of styles. For the Bay Area folk it is much like a night at Mission Records or Gilman, but without the stench. (10 song CD, no lyrics, $2 ppd, 1033 Rosewood Ave., San Carlos, CA 94070, feldmans@hotmail.com) (Pete)

FOOLOCRACY play all the best of the early/mid-80s hardcore without sounding like a smorgasbord. Totally great straightforward mid-tempo hardcore, with catchy guitar riffs and a vocalist who sings with anger and passion a lot of people only strive for through shouting. Also, their songs all sound different, a talent that is more unusual than it should be these days. Get this now. ($5 US ppd. 15 song cassette, lyrics included. Kokavec Miroslav, Spacilova 11, 618 00 BRNO, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

GET KILLED possibly has the best demo packaging that I've seen. They also play some pretty hard-biting hardcore tunes that fit right in with the screamo/metalcore that is so popular back east. Straightforward hardcore riffs mixed with guitar wanking, up-beat drumming and screaming vocals. That's why it's a shame that the recording quality is so poor, even for a demo. I'd just like to be able to hear what is going on here a little better. Anyway, expect big things. (7 song CD, with lyrics (in nice booklet form), no home, just a computer, getkilled@lycos.com) (Pete)

HOMOCONSUMENS and **SEE YOU IN HELL** split their demo. HOMOCONSUMENS plays classic early 80s hardcore, melodic as well as driving, with a half speaking, half singing style to the vocals. SEE YOU IN HELL plays thrash with modern touches, like fancier guitar solos, some darkness in the rhythm section and the screamer vocals. They do covers by DRI, NEGATIVE FX, SODOM, KRITICA, and SITUACE RADEGAST. Totally great. ($5 US ppd. This cassette has 22 songs on the HC side and 18 songs on the SYIH side, lyrics included. Kokavec Miroslav, Spacilova 11, 618 00 BRNO, Czech Republic.) (Erin)

HOTLIPS MESSIAH does the snotty, up-tempo punk thing. There is a hint of X, partially due to the female vocals. It's pretty straight-up stuff, no tricks, not much new, but it's tight and played pretty well. (8 song CD, with lyrics, 2318 Northgate Ave., North Riverside, IL 60546, newprimate@hotmail.com) (Pete)

HOUSECAT-SIZED FENNEC has put together what seems to be a compilation of all recorded material plus live stuff. It's not really a demo, but I get the CDRs regardless. They play fast, goofy punk in the style of FYP. I suppose that they are OK at it. (38 song CD, with lyrics, PO Box 511441, New Berlin, WI 53151, www.belial-records.com) (Pete)

INGLORIOUS BASTARDS play basic, melodic street punk. It's similar to early SWINGIN UTTERS or the WORKIN STIFFS. Yea, it's been done before but at least they do it pretty well. (5 song CD, no lyrics, pissdrunx01@hotmail.com) (Pete)

JETAVANA GROVE plays pop punk with an emotional edge. I can't help but think they should be from Pennsylvania due to the fact that the best references I can make are PLOW UNITED and MAN WITHOUT PLAN. Scratchy, nasal vocals, upbeat songs and a mixture of clean and distorted guitars. They've got a ton of catchy hooks and well-written songs. The recording fits the style perfectly as well, good but not too good. (4 song CD, with Lyrics, $3 ppd, PO Box 692283, Quincy, MA 02269-2283, slacker555@hotmail.com) (Pete)

LEAD THE WAY plays a combination of two-thirds SNUFF, driving and hooky melodic punk, and one-third JOURNEY, big vocals sort of soaring above and fancy guitar work. I know it sounds crazy, but they have stadium rock moments, but maybe it's the clean production I'm hearing. They've also got some emo tortured singing vocals going on, too, that totally work. ($3 or 2£, ppd. 6 song CD, lyrics included. 19 Jubilee Crescent, Outwood, Wakefield, Yorkshire, WF13DS, UK.) (Erin)

LIFE OUT OF BALANCE plays thrashy, emotional hardcore in a MOHINDER type way. Chaotic guitars and drums play at high speeds while the vocalist mixes talking with deep screams. Of course, there are metal style breakdowns. (4 song CD, with lyrics, in a paper bag, lifeoutofbalance@hotmail.com) (Pete)

THE MEAN-AGERS play charming lo-fi energetic pop punk that has

elements of BITCHIN', BLATZ, and FORCED VENGEANCE. A winning combination if you ask me. ($3 ppd. 25 song cassette, no lyrics included. P. O. Box 23, Bloomington, IN 47402.) (Erin)

NEVER ENOUGH plays mid-tempo hardcore, that changes parts but not tempo or drive too much. Really solid, too slow for youth crew although that's the kind of energy that's included here. The vocals are shouted clearly without being raw or "ARRRGGGHHHH"-ish. ($2 ppd. 6 song CD, lyrics included. 5075 Wright Ave., Baltimore, MD 21205.) (Erin)

NUKLEHEAD play the sort of street punk that's mid-tempo, with the drums and guitars playing steady and the rolling bass lines punching things up. The vocals are of a ranting kind of spoken style and there are some sweetly sung "wo-wo-wo's" in the background. ($2. 4 song CD, no lyrics included. 660 Justice Ridge Rd., Candler, NC 28715.) (Erin)

THE OSCARS play something in-between the MISFITS and the early QUEERS stuff, just not as good. Three chord punk rock with throaty vocals over mid-tempo songs. The one slow, monotone song does not work at all. (5 song CD, no lyrics, they live is cyberspace, oscars666@hotmail.com)

PAL plays a somewhat snotty, unpolished style of punk rock. Despite what their promo sheet says, they don't sound like FUGAZI and they certainly don't sound like GANG OF FOUR. Some of the songs are poppy and tend toward the Sacramento nerd-core sound, others are 15-second interludes, as well as some 70s style punk tunes with the addition of keyboards. The rest sound like an attempt at new wave thrash. They are all raw, very raw. (15 song CD, with lyrics, www.palpalpal.net) (Pete)

RACIN FOR PINKS has a mid-80s punk rock pace, taking the fork in the road that was not hardcore, with vocals that are equally influenced by Southern California layered wo-wo-wo's (a la BAD RELIGION) and screaming heartfelt emo style, but while still singing. The thing I can't quite put my finger on, is there are also moments of sing along pop energy that shine through. Yee Haw! (5 song CD, no lyrics included. 222 Sonora Dr., Casselberry, FL 32746.) (Erin)

REBEL SPIES sound like if MONSULA spent more time in emo school, and although still had some pop going on, the quirky bits and tortured vocals started fighting it out. Lots of chugga chugga moments, and yelling vocals on top of a mid-tempo, swelling pop punk base. ($2 ppd. 4 song cassette, no lyrics included. 17 Lakewook Ave., Manahawkin, NJ 08050.) (Erin)

RENTOKILLER plays rock'n, screamy hardcore in the same vein as the early JR EWING stuff. Heavy, chugga hardcore with totally inaudible screaming, yet there is a catchy element to the riffs and chord choice. Brutal but listenable. (7 song CD, with lyrics, Erik Harald, Stenbocksgatan 8, 506 34 Boras, Sweden, www.rentokiller.tk) (Pete)

THE RUNS play basic songs that pit the RAMONES against the MISFITS. The playing is a bit stiff and the vocals tend to be monotone at times, which leads to a recording that lacks energy. But hey, it's just a demo. (5 song CD, with lyrics, housing is expensive in the East Bay, labotomy@jps.net) (Pete)

Dear Rotcore: If you want people to discover the new 'core you are all about, please send in an address with your demo. Even a return address on the envelope will suffice. —Erin.

SAD SOCIETY plays some pretty catchy punk tunes that are poppy but aggressive. Musically it sounds like a pop-punk version of FUGAZI, especially in the guitar work, with just a hint of old school straight edge. Yea, it sounds crazy but that's just how it sounds. (6 song CD, no lyrics, 29 Durar Dr., Clermiston, Edinburgh, EH4 7HW, Scotland, UK) (Pete)

THE SPARK plays driving fast hardcore, with the mosh parts actually slowing down and with a touch of grooving going on. The vocals are shouted, angry, and lower in the throat, but no sign of growling going on. ($2 ppd. 3 song CD, lyrics included. 2981 Falls Rd., Baltimore, MD 21211.) (Erin)

STEADY BANG is a lo-fi kind of garagey rockin band, pretty straightforward. The guitars are really dominant, but they day it was recorded with one mic in their house, so who knows if that's true past this recording. They've got mostly lady vocals that are kind of like the TRIGGERS, but she's got more lyrics to fit into the same amount of time, and her voice is lower pitched. She's got a good scream. ($2 ppd. 6 song cassette, lyrics included. c/o James McCormick, 2717 Dodson Ave., Fort Smith, AR 72901.) (Erin)

STOLEN FAITH has a lurching, sort of 2/4 beat going on underneath a NEGATIVE APPROACH approach (ha ha) to the rest of their sound. Venomous shouted vocals. Paul says they sound like those bands on *The Process of Elimination* comp. They also do BORN AGAINST and YOUTH BRIGADE covers. ($2 ppd. 8 song cassette, no lyrics included. 1811 Eagle Dr., Cheyenne, WY 82009.) (Erin)

THIS SCARES ME is determined not to be outdone in the packaging department. It's nice that people take time to make even their demos look really good. Musically they play high-speed hardcore. Screaming vocals, catchy but heavy music (sometimes sounding like FILTH). The recording quality is decent for a demo and the music may not be amazing but it has the energy. (6 song CD, with lyrics, 853 Reese St., Athens, GA 30606, scott@fendforyourself.com) (Pete)

TIME TO DIE's recently released demo does not sound so recent. This Midwestern band brings you back to the days of NEGATIVE APPROACH and TOXIC REASONS. Straight-up, minimalist hardcore. The vocalist has a deep growl while the guitars chug along to mid-tempo drumming. The 8-track recording fits their style well. (4 song CD, with lyrics, $3 ppd to Steve Kane, 2340 Alder Court, Aurora, IL 60504, itstimetodieandyournext@hotmail.com) (Pete)

THE TRANSFUSIONS are stripped down punk, heavily influenced by the old days' simplicity; Johnny Thunders is all over this. They play slow but steady, and have a singer who sings with all the snottiness of a bored suburban teen. That's a good thing! The songs with the guitars louder are better, but this is good. Mine came with a zine called *Panic Action,* which has a cool essay about the old days' records being about fighting spirit, and the shopping "spirit" of today, where punk is "a less pre-packaged form of entertainment." He wants more. ($2 ppd. 13 song CD, no lyrics included. 1507 Daniels St., Tallahassee, FL 32310.) (Erin)

UNTEEN is great. The first song is classic "Rat bites, rat bites, all over my baby's baby!" It's rocking simple punk, but totally grooves at the same time. The lady vocals are a cool mix of talking and singing, sounding like the MUFFS, and she's also got a badass scream. The guy vocals are less about singing, but still melodic. ($5. 7 song CD, no lyrics included. 911 W. Lombard, Springfield, MO 65806.) (Erin)

WACO FUCK plays a chaotic screaming mess of hardcore, lightening speed with a vocalist who deep throat yells over the whole thing. Sure, they slow it down occasionally, but their mosh parts are about an eighth as long, and are usually filled with fancy guitar work. It sounds clearer than their last demo, too! ($1 ppd. 10 song cassette, lyrics included. 2506 Via Roso, Carlsbad, CA 92008.) (Erin)

ZOMBIE SHARKS truly do sound like the QUEERS did early in their career. RAMONES style songs that are sped up and given snotty, nasal vocals. All 10 songs tend to sound the same. (10 song CD, with lyrics, $3 ppd (from everywhere) Gladkov Vladimir, 30 Shabolovka Str., Apt. 96, Moscow 115419, Russia, www.zombiesharks.narod.ru) (Pete)

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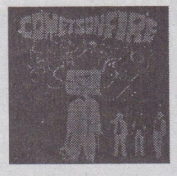

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9/10	Washington, DC	9/23-9/24	California, tba

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ZINES

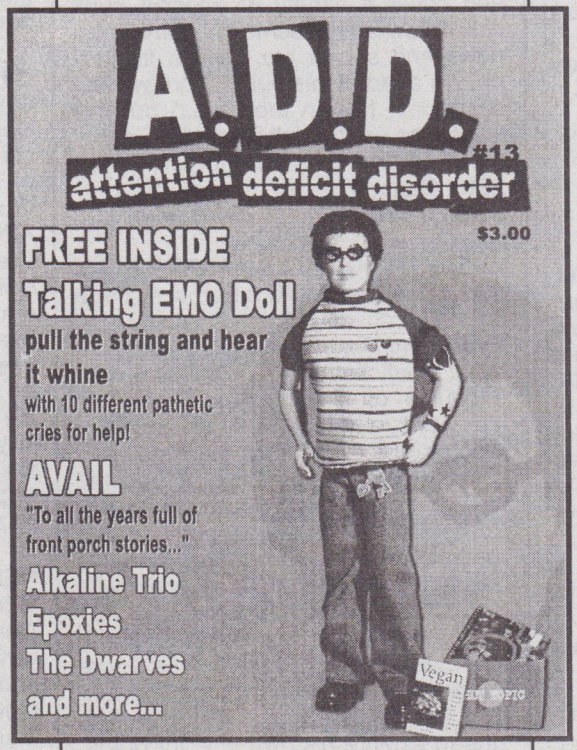
Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (GH) Greg Harvester, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER #13 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 50 pgs
Punk music zine consisting mostly of interviews. Included in this issue: Avail, the Dwarves, Alkaline Trio, Epoxies, Agent Orange, The Cro(w)s, and many more. Also, an interview with the Executive Producer of *Bum Fights*. Pages and pages of reviews, and they're not afraid to be negative. The "Talking Emo Doll" on the cover ("I wish it was raining outside") was my favorite part, along with the tribute to Radon, which calls the band "Clash great...Cheap Trick great!" I don't agree, but I liked the article. (GZ)
PO Box 8240 / Tampa, FL 33674
Addzine@gte.net

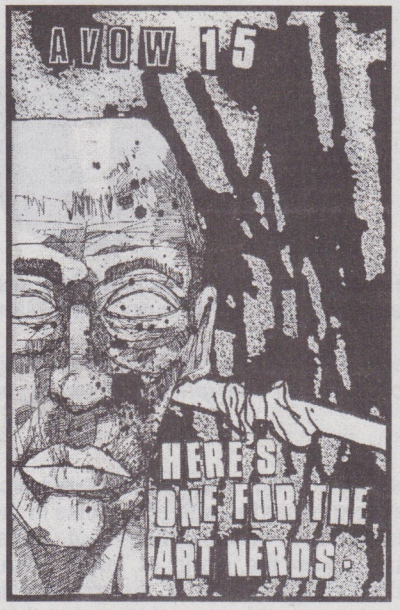
AVOW #15 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
What seems at first to be a small collection of Keith Rosson's artwork (fantastical, otherworldly line drawings often manipulated by xeroxing) turns into a diaristic capsule of a portion of the artist's life. Rosson's drive and sources of inspiration are highlighted, as are his failures and embarrassments. A non-linear span of the years 1997-2003 takes us through sketchy punk sketches up to more detailed brutal expressions of this cold, cold world that we live in. I like this. I'm not totally into the artwork, but I like the slow pace that unfolds as you first look at the art, then flip back to the beginning index and learn about the impetus behind these pieces. Keith asks prisoners not to send money, but two stamps for their copies of his zine. (SD)
Keith Rosson / 2410 SE Taylor / Portland, OR 97214
keithrosson@hotmail.com

BROKEN PENCIL #22 / $5
8.5 x 11 - printed - 104 pgs
Another issue of "the magazine of zine culture and the independent arts" crosses my desk, and all is well in my little reviewing world. *Broken Pencil* continues its pursuit of excellence in its "comics" issue with articulate features on Phoebe Gloeckner, erotic comics, the medium of comics as an art form, and personal ruminations on comic book artists' thinly-veiled autobiographies, as well as interviews with Dave Cooper, Colin Upton, and Todd McFarlane's dad. The usual well-chosen excerpts from zines and comics are sprinkled throughout the magazine, and the review sections contain some of the best reviews I've ever read *for fun*. Essential. (MN)
POB 203, Stn P / Toronto, ON / M5S 2S7 Canada
http://www.brokenpencil.com



BOXCUTTER Summer 2003 / $1
4 x 6 - printed - 26 pgs
I wonder how long the Boxcutter Collective has been around? This small, diverse group of East Bay folks is concerned with sharing practical, everyday stories with other folks in their immediate communities—not necessarily with the world at large. With a loose missive like that, there's no telling how sloppy things could get, but this is a trim, well edited collection of pieces, diverse but focused. Inside is an essay by an Oakland teenager about the validity and quality of reproductive health care and support at the Teen Clinic, along with why it sucks to deal with sex as a teenage girl of color in the city. There's also a review of the recent Weather Underground documentary, something I expect will resound with a lot of young leftist types, and small pieces of prose and poetry. With lots of contributions by East Bay people of color, of various ages and inclinations, this is a promising project that hopefully can touch a lot of folks who are unaccustomed to zines as a means of resistance. I look forward to seeing the next installment. They are looking for contributions by like-minded Bay Area folks. (AC)
boxcutter@lists.riseup.net

CHAIRMAN OF THE BORED #11 / trade
8.5 x 11 - copied - 20 pgs
This is one of those marginally comprehensible prison zines that you know is keeping someone from totally losing it in the slammer—Folsom, in this case. Perhaps one of the more important uses for a zine, along with tying together the physically isolated and emotionally overtaxed population of punks in prison. Cut 'n' paste in the extreme—even the stories are a cut 'n' paste of fact, fantasy, and rant. You could always write Trickster or Mustafa and send a contribution, or just a friendly hello. (AC)
C. Knowles #K-91158 / FSP Box 715071 / B2-B4-27 / Represa, CA 95671
Phovieng Keosoupha #K-24012 B1-5-03 / FSP Box 715071 / Represa, CA 95671



COLDHANDSDEADHEART #16 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 42 pgs
Words and art can be a fine combination. However, this zine, I just didn't "get." Mike is a very good artist, the style is somewhere between Nick Blinko, Bill Plympton, and Edward Gorey. However, the writing is a stream-of-consciousness run-on sentence that didn't necessarily relate to the art and frankly, bored me. (MD)
Mike Twohig / 83 1/2 Howell St Apt 2 / Rochester, NY 14607
m_twohig@hotmail.com

DOLL # 193 / $5
7 x 10 - printed - 140 pgs - Japanese
This issue of the pan-subcultural Japanese glossy features "US neo-rockabilly," with neo-rockabilly dude Levi Dexter on the cover. Also: the Locust, Retro Gretion, Nashville Pussy, and Rose Rose, plus photos and short interviews of Japanese and international bands, and tons of ads. This *Doll* includes reprints of *MRR's* interviews with Krigshot and Bob Suren, in return for which they are supposed to send us hard-to-find Japanese punk records for review, but hardly ever do. (AC)
#303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9 / Kita / Kohenji / Suginami-ku / Tokyo / Japan
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

EAST VILLAGE INKY #20 / $2
2.75 x 4.25 - copied - 24 pgs
Ayun is a good writer and this is one of the better *East Village Inky*s I've read. If somehow you've never heard of this zine, it's about Ayun's life raising kids in New York City. This issue actually seems a little less kid-focused than others, consisting of many NYC store reviews, veggie recipes, and avoiding a high school reunion. There is child-rearing content too, of course, my favorite giving tips on birthday parties for kids. My biggest criticism of this long-running and steady zine is that I wish it would go a little deeper, because at times it seems oddly naïve, especially the weirdly dumb "advice to fathers" centerfold about resisting being "feminized." I know it's tongue-in-cheek, but it just seems so 70s for men to feel like crying at movies would be a big deal. Maybe I'm just too Californian. Another example—instead of a small illustration of a "dog-preferring neighbor," let's have an article on child-hate. But let's not dwell on the negative—this is a zine you'd like if you were a crafty mom or dad raising young kids. (GZ)
Ayun Halliday / PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
www.ayunhalliday.com.

EQUALIZING DISTORT Issue 3, #6 / no price listed
8 x 10.5 - copied - 16 pgs
For summer, *Equalizing Distort* brings us two Ontario bands, Knuckle Brain and the G-Men. Both interviews discuss lyrics and band history and stuff like that. Better than this are the music reviews, which are really well written and cover a variety of (mostly) punk shit. A few advertisements, some local news and shows etc. listings finish it up. I'm a fan of this publication (which I suspect is free in their area) but this issue was on the dull side. (JM)
91 St George St / Toronto, ON / M5S 2E8 / Canada
www.cuit.fm

EVERYTHING FALLS APART #2 / $3, 50p & postage in UK, 2 Euros, or trade
5.5 x 8 - copied - 30 pgs
Everything Falls Apart looks like your basic small circulation music zine, with a couple of simple, cleanly laid out interviews, a rant or two, and reviews of records and zines. But there's a personality here that promises to become more developed with upcoming issues. Editor Will lives in Leeds, but is from a "battered little town" in Wales, and this clearly is important. The interview with Finland's Manifesto Jukebox was very well done, and I liked the rest of the zine well enough, but I was more intrigued by a sentimental tension running through this issue. Will uses the zine to explore his own love for home, and on a broader scale, the lines between patriotism and community; the importance belonging to a people rather than a nation. (AC)
PO Box 215 / Leeds / LS26 OWP / UK
willfallsapart@hotmail.com

FOUND A JOB #2 / 65¢
5.5 x 6.5 - copied - 16 pgs
I really enjoyed this awesome little zine for crafty tailors. This issue details the many and simple ways that you can

alter t-shirts to fit your size, aesthetic, and silly individualism. Among the variations that they offer are; the big shirt into small shirt technique, the grommets on the sides stitch up, and the Sheena Easton hang down. Crappy XXXL shirts can once again be worn by the mini masses!! (CR)
266 Olean St / Worchester, MA / 01602

INFERNO PUNX #1 / $16 / $25 world
9 x 13 - printed - 76 pgs
Holy fucking shit, this is a fucking monster of a photo zine—seventy-six pages of photos documenting the Japanese crust scene. Gloom, Framtid, The Additiction, Disclose, Laukaus, Effigy, Life, SDS, and tons more of studs'n spikes clad crusties spending many many loud nights. The construction fits the music it documents quite we—purposely chaotic with mountains of white on black text. The photo quality is fucking great too—you can just smell the sweat and feel the energy pouring off the book. Amazing. (MT)
MCR c/o Sound Pollution / PO Box 17742 / Covington, KY 41017

NERVE #2 / $4
8.25 x 11.75 - printed - 30 pgs
Nerve is a free local magazine published by Catalyst, a British cooperative of artists and writers dedicated to "promoting grassroots arts and culture on Merseyside." This passionate, sophomore issue is chock full of fascinating interviews and essays, including an interview with two African-Americans who fled the United States in search of political asylum; an interview with Metin Yegin, a Turkish filmmaker, about the attack by the Turkish military on political prisoners; in-depth profiles of British independent arts organizations and foundations; an interview with American author William Blum about U.S. state violence; essays on corporate crime, the U.S. invasion of Iraq,

and so much more. Crammed in between the larger essays and interviews are all sorts of short stories, profiles, editorials, and reviews of all things pertaining to progressive, independent cultural production. The political editorials are standard fare for those who are already reading left-leaning publications from either side of the pond, so I found the independent arts focus including the interview with Stan, a Liverpool local who plays his harp in a neighborhood bar to be much more refreshing. Still, *Nerve* is a great local magazine with a strong sense of identity and commitment, and provides a valuable resource for independent artists who believe that making art is always a political act. (MN)
Catalyst Creative Media Ltd / 18-22 Trowbridge St / Liverpool / L3 5NB UK
http://www.catalystmedia.org.uk

THE NEW SCHEME #8 / free
8.5 x 11 - printed - 56 pgs
Sometimes even reviewers get writer's block. Seriously. Let's start with "Things I Learned While Reading This Zine": Jason White of Pinhead Gunpowder, Adeline Records, and The Influents, has been playing second guitar with Green Day. I also learned from Nate Dogg's column entitled "Code of the Lawless" that Bush's tax cuts have given some corporations the ability to actually avoid paying any taxes on profits from overseas operations. Maura Davis of Denali had classical voice training. Milemarker played a show outside the Capitol Building during the State of the Union address as part of a protest, and Mike from Light the Fuse and Run has fifty dogs. I also read a lot of ads. (JB)
PO Box 19873 / Boulder, CO 80308
stuart@thenewscheme.com

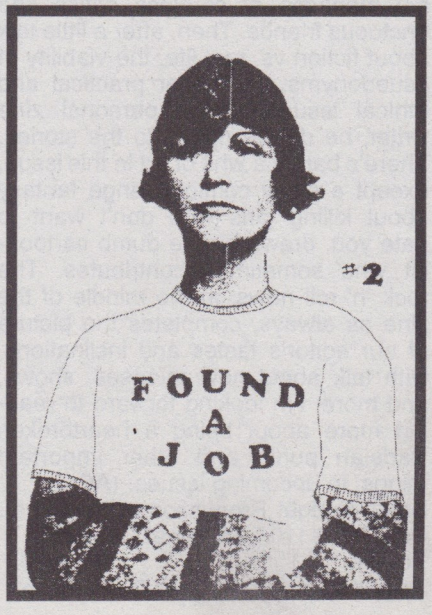
NO KIND OF SUPERSTAR #4 / £1 UK, 4 IRCs or 5 euros Europe, 5 IRCs or $5 world
7.5 x 10 - printed - 56 pages
There are nine names listed on the cover, and I've heard of two of 'em—Love (a decent history and a number of reviews of recent European shows—I wish there was more info on Arthur's criminality though) and the Banana Splits (who I guess are bubblegum? I would watch the program when I was nine but it just seems creepy now. Included are photographs of the Splits in the studio). A bunch of newish bands are profiled, like Flamingo 50, the recently disbanded Pop Threat, France's Slow Slushy Boys and Sweden's Blisterhead; along with some old-timer stuff: Donna Marie of the Archies (this interview is hampered by her bland answers) and BBC DJ Tony Blackburn. There are reviews and ads as well, but not too many. If you're into this stuff this would be a real great zine to grab—I'm not and still it was OK. (JM)
PO Box 274 / Wakefield WF1 2UG / England

PARIAH #6 / two stamps or free to prisoners
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 44 pgs
Collection of short essays and collages touching on topics such as social responsibility, gay marriage, military recruiting, war, and more. Also contains a Steve Albini article from over ten years ago about indie bands signing to major labels. (Holy shit, Nirvana's on a major label now! Tell Mike Thorn so we don't review that one). Well, it is a good article. *Pariah* seems youth focused with an eye on the world situation. Good heartfelt writing. (GZ)
nief@sbcglobal.net

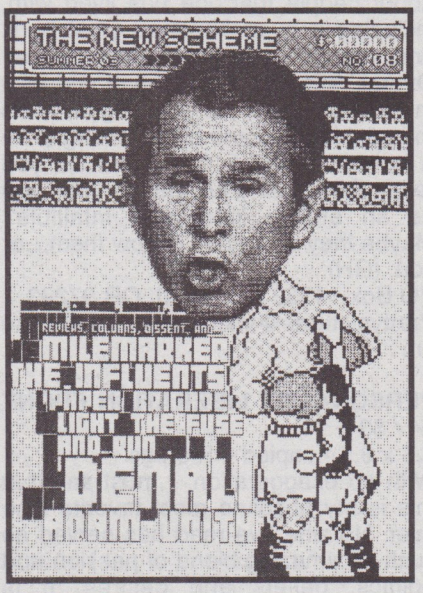
PASSED OUT #2 / $2
8.5 x 11 - copied - 18 pgs.
Punk flyers, if you're wanting 'em. Posters for mostly 80s-era hardcore acts, such as Government Issue, Minor Threat, Big Boys, that kinda thing. All of 'em are reduced to roughly 1" x 2", meaning that they can't be copied and/or posted up on your dorm wall if that's your aim. The selection's all well and good, though it leans a little heavy on the GBH for my liking. Kinda skinny for the asking price, though perhaps I've been spoiled by coffee-table masterworks like *Fucked Up & Photocopied* that cover the same terrain. (JH)
1204 W 9th #4 /Austin, TX 78703

THE PERFECT MIX TAPE SEGUE #2
50¢ or 2 stamps
4.25 x 4.6 - copied - 16 pgs
In this issue, Joe tells about his doubts and insecurities dealing with the DIY scene and his relationships with his peers. He ruminates on trying to find happiness with his past accomplishments and the ways that his decisions have affected his current life. Then, a few pages later, he goes onto one of my favorite subjects...*roommate reviews*!!! The reviews are actually just a few straight-up interesting stories about people that Joe has lived with, including a hypochondriac crust punk and an SUV driving swing dancer. Overall, this was a good read and kept my interest over the few pages, even though I found some of the writing to be a tad bit arrogant. Come on! Do you really think that your friends view you as an ethical ideal and infallible? Maybe they do...I don't know them...or you. (GH)
PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97293
Prettypictures@microcosmpublishing.com

PERSONALITY LIBERATION FRONT #4 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 106 pgs
With no exaggeration, I must say that this is my absolute most favorite zine ever. No zine I've read has served as such an amazing blend of passion and politics, beliefs and desires. It is absolutely inspirational. This issue covers many of the range of subjects that I've come to expect from Kylie, feminism, body politics, men's role(s) in sexism and patriarchy, consumerism and personal politics. She surveys various male folks in the punk community as to their relationship with masculinity and a redefining of what roles men play. As always, her questions and observations make the reader subtly shake their heads in agreement. She also covers herbal abortion and emergency contraceptives, Boxcar Bertha and travels in Mexico. *PLF* is a great collection of writing that anyone could



appreciate. And in case you need more convincing, there's also a substantial music and zine review section, and a bonus CD with a bunch of Australian bands. You need to get this and Kylie needs to make more issues. (CR)
Kylie / PO Box 3023 / South Brisbane, BC QLD 4101 / Australia



RAD PARTY #32 / $3
4 x 6 - printed - 98 pgs - French
OK, now Stephane is officially writing these much faster than I can read them, especally in French. And these aren't like sparse pages; they're crammed with (carefully handwritten) prose! This issue, subtitled "Happy Sad Days Gone Away," takes a turn toward more personal writing than his usual, with the first chapter of a novel which he promises will continue through upcoming issues. In the intro, Stephane writes about twelve years of *Rad Party*: the internal menaces of self-criticism and self-sabotage, the external menaces of careless critics and unctuous friends. Then, after a little talk about fiction vs. real life, the viability of psuedonyms, and other practical and ethical issues of the personal zine writer, he delves right into the stories. There's barely a whit of art in this issue, except a shitty comic/revenge fantasy about killing girls who don't want to date you, drawn by the dumb cartoonist who sometimes contributes. The rock 'n' roll news, in the middle of the zine as always, completes the picture of our editor's tastes and inclinations, with talk about new releases, shows, and more. I'm looking forward to reading more about being a heartbroken Parisian punk, and other important things, in upcoming issues. (AC)
Small Budget Productions (Stéphane), BP #7, 78 110 Le Vesinet Cedex France
Smallbudget productions@minitel.net

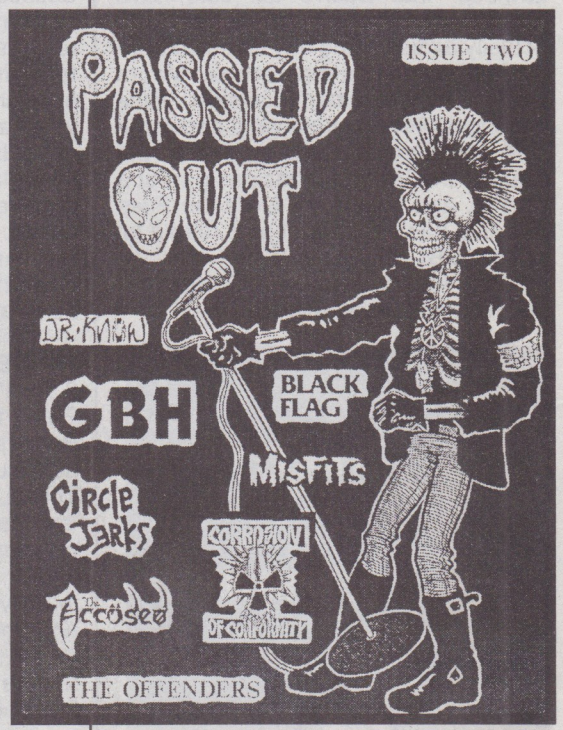
ROCK N ROLL CREATION #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 32 pgs
These kids could either be 17 or 37, they're British, and hail from small tiny villages out in the middle of nowhere England. The mish-mash of information and punk pop-culture is readable in a remedial fashion. Highlights include Russian film reviews, practical uses for old 7"s, and quick histories of the House of Lords and Lord Liverpool. (SD)
Matt Neale / 126 Stowey Road / Yatton Somerset BS49 4EB / UK

ROCKTOBER #36 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 88 pgs
Some issues of *Rocktober* I dive right into and some are more like a slow sink. As ever, this issue is fucking voluminous, but since I had never heard of the sometimes 60-year-old underground shit bein' exhumed, there's a bit of a learning curve. Are you stoked on "the Armenian Mickey Katz"? Were you desperate for the inside scoop on the Gamma Goochie Himself, or "the longest running puppet theater in America"? I wasn't, but was still rewarded for my efforts. Also exhaustively exposed are Sid Lavernts (complimentary CD enclosed with this issue), sleazy 70s soul sexton Roy C. (oral sex "destroy[s] the nerves in a lady" via digestive juices in saliva, makes straight men fence-sitters, and goes against God, he says), and author Jerry Zolten. Even the reviews are good. (JM)
1507 E 53rd St #617 / Chicago, IL 60615
www.rocktober.com

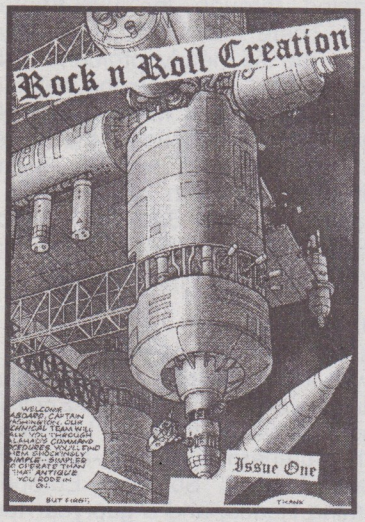
RUNNING ON EMPTY #2 / #3
4.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Remember that song that goes "How *much* is that *doggy* in the *window*?" For some reason this zine just reminded me of that song. I can't really think of any of the things I was going to say about it without thinking them in that tune. I feel insane. For the rest of this review you absolutely have to read it in that tune. This kid wrote a fake interview with The Fall in which he asked questions and answered them with lyric quotes. He also offers to trade mix tapes with you, and his mix tape is the soundtrack to his zine. Here's a quote: "Sometimes I think it would be great if eating was not at all mandatory for human beings. It would save me money, which I could spend on vinyl. Also, it would solve famine." If I didn't despise the robotic look of computer generated everything I'd give two thumbs up but I think this more deserves a hitchhiker's thumb on at least one hand, you know, the kind that bend all the way backwards? (JB)
Jon Wood / 15 Denver Road / Dartford, Kent / DA1 3 LA / UK

SHREDDING PAPER #16 / $3
8.5 x 11 - printed - 108 pgs
It calls itself "America's Record Review Magazine"—and review records it does. *Shredding Paper* covers a wide variety of music—punk rock, pop, garage, indie, noise, and even a few mainstream records worthy of listen. The reviews are often well written with good descriptions and band comparisons. Good for someone like me who is oblivious to a lot of music out there today. I saw a few reviews that piqued my interest. There are also a few short columns and interviews with David Gedge (yes!) and the Exploding Hearts. (MD)
PO Box 2271 / San Rafael, CA 94912
http://www.shreddingradio/sp.html

SLAVE #8 / $4
8.5 x 11 - printed - 98 pgs
Eff yes! Totally. Without being too sure what is behind the title of this publication, I heartily ate it up. Enjoying sitting in the rare occurrence of beating SF sunshine, drinking an entire bottle of water in one gulp, taking in the article on Vegetable oil as a fuel alternative, a comprehensive screen-printing guide, a primer for DIY composting and mulching, fiction, some interviews with Between The Buried And Me, Most Precious Blood, and some non-fiction pieces on "indie" and Joe Strummer.



The whole zine is really pretty and thoughtfully composed. There's even a centerfold *Slave* poster and an Uwharria CD and interview included. (JB)
PO Box 10093 / Greensboro, NC 27404



SLOW LEAK #1 / stamp or trade
5.5 x 8 - copied - 12 pgs
This scrappy cut and paste zine is one of the very few lately that has made me laugh out loud. In his premiere issue, John brings you short stories about bike wrecks, bike trips, relationship woes, and a *really* sloppy map of prime air hockey locations in Austin, Texas. In explaining how to travel by bike, John offers these observations: "You don't need a fancy camping stove. I've gotten by with a dumpstered coffee can sitting in an open fire." And "Coffee and doughnuts for breakfast!!" *Slow Leak* has that sort of layed-out-drunk-at-3 am feel to it and it works. Send this guy a stamp. It's good, especially to those of you who like stories that start off with lines like, "It was the kind of house where attempts at group decision making and house solidarity led to nights like the one we all decided to sit in the kitchen and smoke crack together, instead of slinking off to our own little corners to smoke crack alone, as had been the recent trend." Yeah. Enjoy. (GH)
3209 Larry Ln / Austin, TX 78722

SNAKE PIT Anthology III / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 100 pgs
I didn't expect to like this, what with the Friendster listing in the front, and the fact that it's a daily diary spanning a year, with three comic panels to illustrate what Ben did each day. The drawing style is pretty simple—cute, but rudimentary. Some days it's "woke up/band practice/got drunk," so I thought it was going to get old fast. However, before a "few weeks" had passed, I was *totally* sucked in by this. The storytelling is great, and even the mundane becomes interesting. Some days have great stories, some don't, but I like the idea of documenting *something* about each day. There's romance, incontinence, drunkenness, bad jobs, and plus Ben plays a Ripper bass, so cool. I sat and read the whole thing in one sitting, and got so distracted I stopped paying attention to the baseball game I was watching on TV and missed a Barry Bonds home run. Ben, by the way, is a band member in the latest version of J Church (but don't expect to recognize Lance from the drawings!) It's definitely headed for a long-term position in the bathroom magazine rack. Awesome. (MD)
PO Box 49447 / Austin, TX 78765
www.youngamericancomics.com/snakepit

SPIT & INK #1 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 22 pgs
A passionate screed full of muddied pen and ink drawings of rag doll-like characters, this zine pulls no punches. Although I could have done without the prose poems, this issue is filled out with an editorial about the frightening effect of state surveillance on our everyday behavior (with a Foucauldian nod), an ambitious essay on racism, a history of nature worship (not as hippie-ish as it sounds), and an interview with the local Food Not Bombs. Whatever else might be said about this zine (e.g., its well-worn topics, and did I mention the prose poems?) Eric's feelings run strong and deep, and his dedication to the personal truth of these feelings is all over these pages. His drawings of stub-born urchins and scary monsters are also compelling; they remind me of some of Tim Burton's non-cinematic art ("The Melancholy Death of Oyster Boy"). Good work! (MN)
Eric / 32D Greygates / Stillorgan Road / Stillorgan / Co. Dublin
Ireland

STRAINT #7 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
A zine "for shadow-males, supermen, and other nervous genders." "What is a boy?" was the most interesting piece in this issue. The author delineates the concepts behind different types of boys (and bois) with quotes from gender theorists and various websites. There are also articles on looking for a lesbian equivalent to the term "fag hag," a review of the traveling Sex Workers Art Show, and thoughts on bubblegum. I believe the author is a grad student, but the writing style is very non-academic. Every issue also comes with a poster saying, "If I can't use porn I don't want to be part of your revolution" to which I'd respond, "What revolution are you talking about?" but I'm feeling cranky today. This is a good zine that I expected a little more from, but it's worth a buck, that's for sure. (GZ)
Lane Van Ham / 1141 E Adams #6 / Tucson, AZ 85719

SUBURBAN VOICE - #46 / $3 / $8 world
8.5 x 11 - printed - 120 pgs
Al Quint is one of my punk rock idols, *Suburban Voice* is his zine. Having reached an age where most folx are long jaded and even longer removed from punk, Mr. Quint keeps pounding along, cranking out one of the most consitantly great punk rock zines going these days. With this issue *Suburban Voice* celebrates its twentieth anniversary and does so with a bang! Great interviews with Amdi Petersens Arme, The Pist, Rambo, Vitamin X, Holding On, Cut The Shit, Balance Of Terror, and Martin from Limp Wrist. Always a pleasure to see this come through the door, can't wait to see the twenty-fifth anniversary roll around. Thumbs up! (MT)
PO Box 2746 / Lynn, MA 01903-2746
suburbanvoice@earthlink.net

THIS IS STILL NOT ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE BAND $2 & 3 stamps or trade
5.5 x 8 - copied - 80 pgs
This is an all cut and paste collection by Julie from her past zines, including *This is Not About Your Favorite Band, Aunt Julie's Anxiety Attack,* and *Little Book of Herbs and Things.* There are some previ-

ously unpublished bits in here as well, a piece that appeared in *Absolutely Zippo*, and more. I'd seen *Aunt Julie's Anxiety Attack* (my God, was that really ten years ago?) but that's about it, I think. Julie's very rudimentary, personal approach covers quite a bit of family nostalgia, short pieces about plants and things, and other odds and ends. Published in commemoration of her 30th birthday. (AC)
Julie Ryan / PO Box 243 / Arcata, CA 95518
julbugrrrl@aol.com

THIS TIME LAST YEAR #4 / $2
5.5 x 7 - copied - 44 pgs
This Time Last Year is a photozine dedicated to the Exploding Hearts, done right before their tragic deaths last month. If you saw the tribute page we ran last month you should be quite familiar with Chrysteai's photos—all of them well done and situated throughout the zine in a very clean layout. Looking through these pages is kind of heartbreaking, glimpsing images of these kids just goofing off and being just that, kids. A somber and well done tribute. (MT)
PO Box 40342 / Portland, OR 97240-0342

THE TRAVELLER / $2
4.5 x 8.5 - copied - 80 pgs
"Precious brave women, salut!" Few zines strike my fancy with the serenity and intensity as evenly matched. I feel great about this one because of the courage and honesty that make up this compilation of travel tales. A lot of the stories come from women when they were traveling alone, which is so inspiring because the women are all really badass. The art is equally amazing and complements the hand-made, personal quality of the layout. (JB)
Spoke / 3572 Ontario E. / Montreal, QC H1W 1R7 Canada
spazzlassie@hotmail.com

TOTAL DISASTER $3
5.5 x 8 - printed - 30 pgs
Total Disaster, which surfaced this winter, is a collection of art and comics by Fly, who's also responsible for the lovely and mysterious *Peops* book you've seen in your local book/comic store, those comics in *Slug & Lettuce,* and much more. This compiles several of her projects and styles. There's a handful of Peops, which are portrait-stories of people whose unusual, daring lives have earned them a position in her (our) community. The "9-11-01" comic is chilling in how well it captures shock, frantic, aimless motion, and disbelief in Fly's NYC. I loved the sad rendition of a vivid dream in which Fly falls profoundly in love with Joey Ramone, only to watch him grow sick and die. What better tribute than a dream affair to a stranger who was really Peops, and helped write the soundtrack to your life? "K-9's First Time" a childhood story loaded with social and sexual pain, is

the least guarded I've seen of Fly's more personal comics, using drawings and prose to draw us in to an uncertain, raw adolescence: "It's all about how fast you can catch on – learn the games – anticipate results speak in secret languages with hidden meanings." There's wisdom in this collection, and also humor, as well as trouble. (AC)
Fly / PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn / New York, NY 10276
fly@bway.net

TRUST #100 / 2 euros
8.5 x 11 - offset - 72 pgs
The centennial issue of the long-running, professional-looking, stylish German zine that's ever been saddled with a wimpy-sounding name. For your dough there's a bunch of columns (auf Deutsch, natürlich), a cover gallery, show calendars, interviews with the band Petrograd and loudmouth Reverend Billy of the Church of Stop Shopping, many, many reviews, and…an article about methods of exercise using the popular/trendy "pilates" method. Allow them their quirks, they're having a birthday! Impressive,as usual. (JH)
Dolf Hermannstäder / Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
http://www.trust-zine.de

WATCHING DAYS BECOME YEARS $4.50
6.75 x 9.75 - printed - 40 pgs
The Kierkegaard quote at the beginning of this sparse comic book (reading time: Embarcadero Station to 24th St. Mission) aptly sums up the content and mindset of artist Jeff LeVine. His thick self-portrait line drawings map a slow—molasses-like—existence in a very mundane world. While LeVine's brand of ennui is familiar, the redundant content of these comics had me trudging through the well-printed book. There are a few pieces that struck me as nearly profound. "No Second Acts" captures the habitual walk from home to work with simple drawings and language that celebrates rather than wallows in the "minimalist repetition" of life. (SD)
Sparkplug Comic Books / PO Box 10952 / Portland, OR 97296-0952
www.sparkplugcomicbooks.com

ZONKED! #7 / $4
8.5 x 11 - copied - 44 pgs
…with a carefully-placed exclamation point (please note). This all-English-language issue features interviews with Southern Cali's on-again-off-again Bellrays, Southern Europe's Burning Heads, and a gap-year tour journal through the wilds of South Africa. Note the tenuous continuity I'm trying to tease through all this. There's some stuff and grainy pics of what bills itself as the Gearfest in Scandinavia, a sort of indoors Woodstock featuring the likes of the Peepshows and Hellacopters. Plenty of reviews of music-type things, which earns *Zonked!* its place in the firmament of punk-rock-fringe-dwelling music journalism. (JH)
Pete Craven / 46 Ashford Rd / Brighton, BN1 6LJ England

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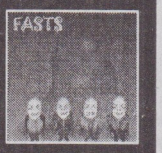

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MCR CO. JAPAN RELEASES

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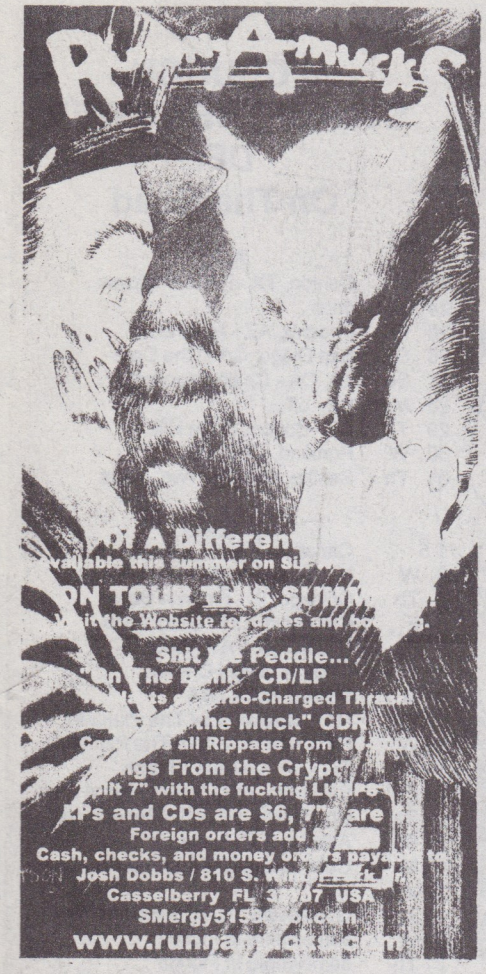

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AMDI PETERSEN S ARMÉ Blod Ser Mere Virkeligt Ud Pâ Film 7" Second ep from Danish HC ragers. Sounds like the missing Dischord 7" from 1981, or lost Black Flag sessions from 1980, but in Danish! **HC7029**

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MISERY The Early Years Includes the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7"s, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. **CD HC5004**

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VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward To Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/ HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. **HC1201**

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ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

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CODE-13 They Made a Wasteland and Called it Peace HC 7008

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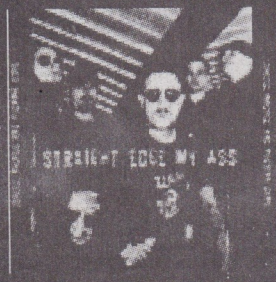

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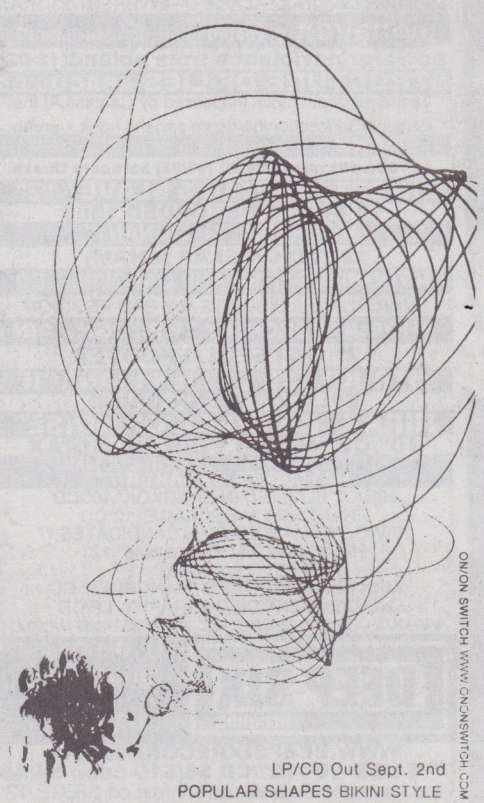

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26	Sa	San Diego, CA - Che Cafe
27	Su	LA, CA - Chain Reaction
28	M	SF - off
29	Tu	SF - Bottom of the Hill
30	W	Portland, OR - TBA
31	Th	Seattle, WA - 2nd Ave. Pizza

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1-5		Canada - TBA
6	W	Minneapolis, MN - Triple Rock
7	Th	Chicago, IL - Fireside Bowl
8	F	Cleveland, OH - Grog Shop
9	Sa	Pittsburgh, PA - Roboto
10	Su	Philly - Calvary Church
11	M	Boston, MA - TBA
12	Tu	NJ – Maxwell's w/ The Plungers
13	W	NYC – North Six w/ The Plungers
14	Th	DC - St. Aloysius Church
15	F	Baltimore, MC - Talking Head Club
16	Sa	Chapel Hill, NC - Go Rehearsals
17	Su	Atlanta, GA - Echo Lounge
18	M	Columbia, SC - New Brookland Tavern
19	Tu	Gainesville, FL - CG Coffeehouse
20	W	somewhere in Florida
21	Th	somewhere in Florida
22	F	Houston, TX - Fat Cat's
23	Sa	Austin, TX - Emo's

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"**The Personal Document** – Live at the Crawlspace in Chicago 05-27-94"
"**Blue Jeans Hurt My Crotch** – Live at the Bottom of the Hill February 2000"
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"**Carlton Fisk** – Live at Studio #158 in North Windham, CT 05-30-94" (HB029)
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SATAN RULES! I'm in a maximum security prison and I'm not even allowed to get magazines in the mail, only letters. I'm into old punk, hardcore, noise, sex, satan, reading, writing, etc...write me now before the world ends. Mikey Matthews #7608590, PO Box 86164, Terminal Annex, L.A., CA 90086-164.

MALEFACTION

WHERE THERE IS POWER, THERE IS ALWAYS RESISTANCE

*" the most brutal mix of grindcore, crust and hardcore **ever** to come out of canada" (punk planet)*
*"easily a contender for **grind album of the year**" (exclaim)*
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Brutal. Sick. Stench. Total sleaze. That, my friend, is but a sampling of the euphemisms conjured up and disgorged to describe this, Malefaction's most complete and utter sonic abomination to date. Where there is Power... is their second volley of grape-shot on G7 Records and is another over-the-top cyclone of grinding, blasting, politically-disobedient disgust that will have all you little pink-bellied bangers running for the nearest thing that even remotely resembles your mommy.

The time has come for this abomination to spill forth its utter filth, so grab the polysporin and apply generously to the affected area because with these 14 recordings Malefaction have successfully defended their title as Winnipeg's reigning super-heavyweight champions. I hope you have some Depends™ left over from their last record. You're going to need them, you stinking shit-panted jack-ass. Just kidding, you don't stink.

OUT JULY 29TH 2003

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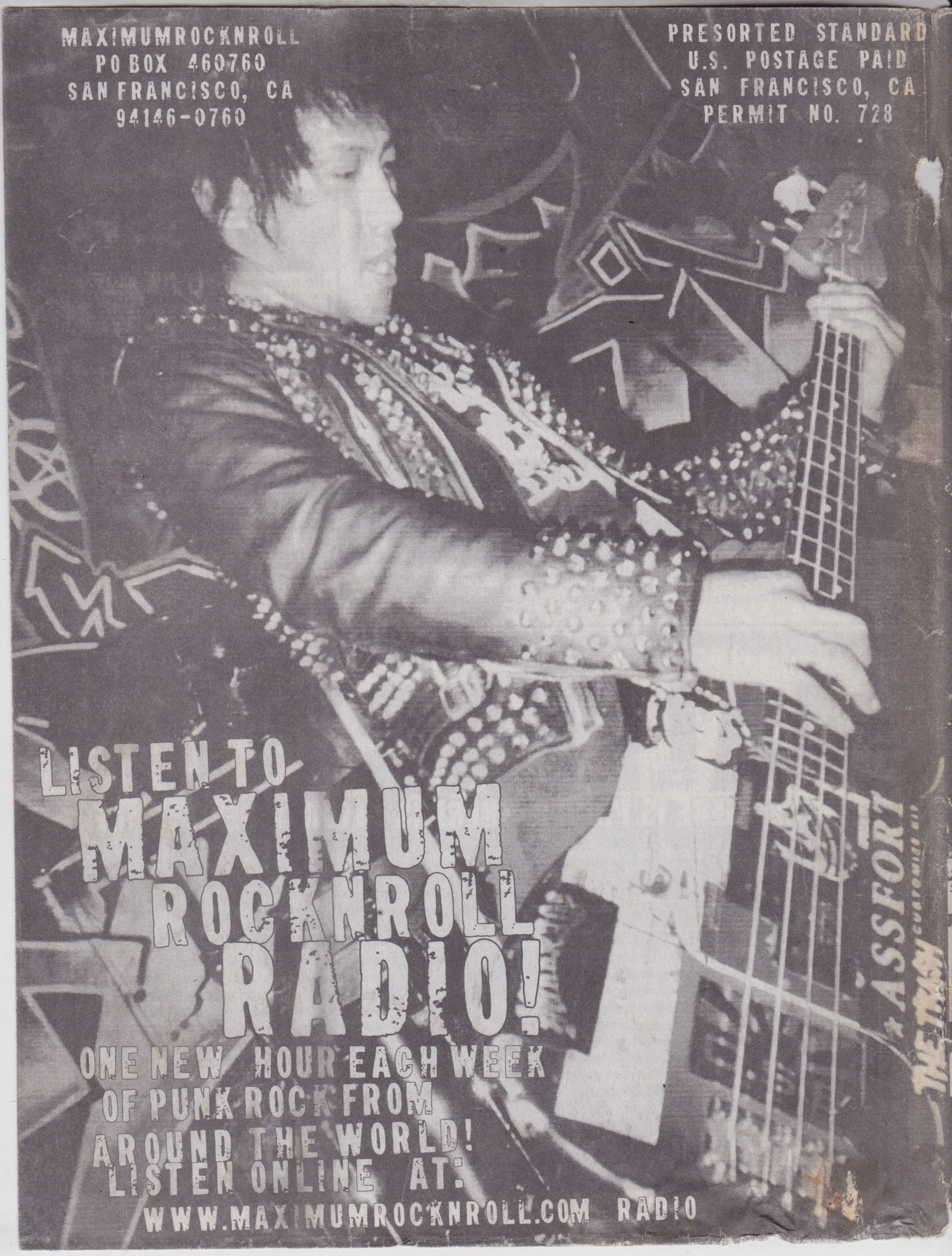

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